Commentary
December 2000

Intifada II

Norman Podhoretz
Daniel Pipes
Hillel Halkin
Efraim Karsh

Proust's Way
Algis Valiunas

The Sex and Violence Show
Kay S. Hymowitz

CONTROVERSY

Controlling Guns
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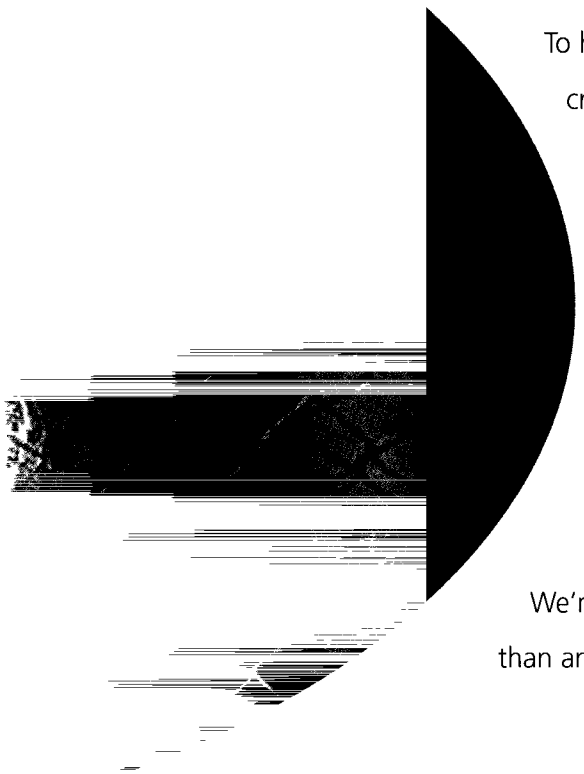

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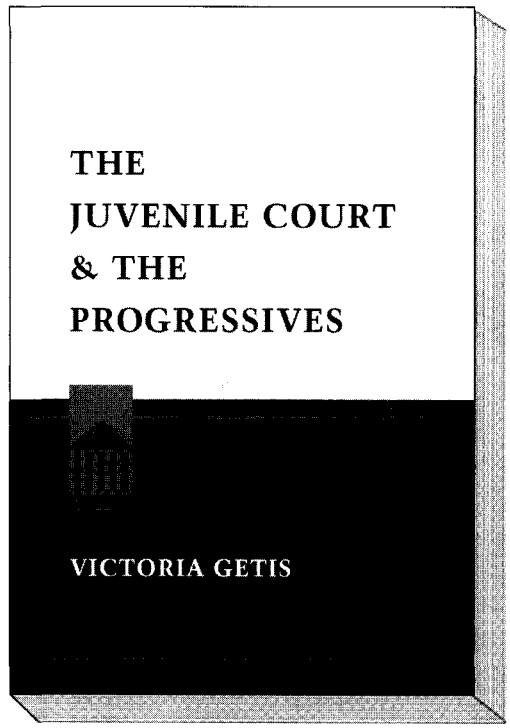

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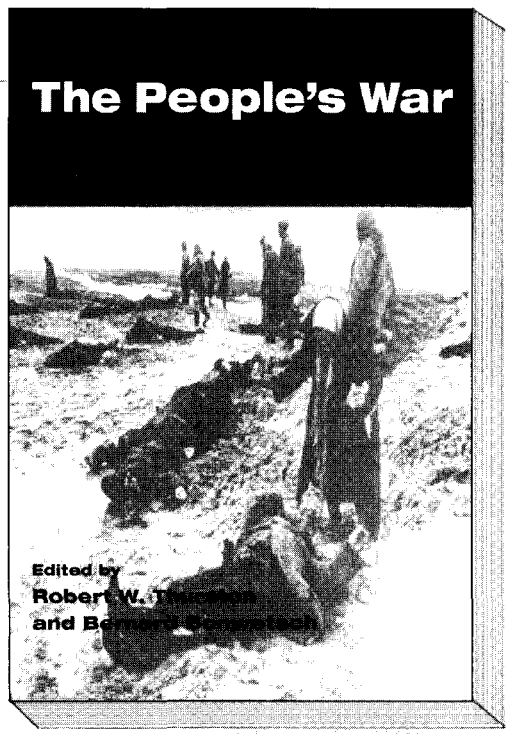

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Commentary
December 2000

Letters from Readers

Same-sex Marriage

To the Editor:

Contrary to Stanley N. Kurtz in "What Is Wrong with Gay Marriage" [September], lesbians and gay men have been making the same arguments for same-sex marriage for more than a generation. It is the opposition's arguments that have shifted most dramatically—a point well illustrated by Mr. Kurtz's article itself.

Opponents of same-sex marriage once drew upon the Bible to argue that marriage entails the union of a man and a woman, but now they invoke instead the functional idea of the complementarity of the sexes. Mr. Kurtz says that marriage meets the complementary goals of men to be masters of their households and women to serve in those households; "the possession of a beloved woman," he claims, enables a man to settle down and give up his promiscuous ways. But he presents no evidence for this thesis, and many social scientists question its implicit gender stereotypes. Indeed, why should the domestication of men be purchased at the price of the servitude of women? Mr. Kurtz seems to think that women "want" this servitude. He may be right about some women, but he is not right about lesbians, for whom same-sex marriage is much more satisfying and functional than different-sex unions.

Mr. Kurtz then shifts his argument to acknowledge that while same-sex couples might love one another, they should not be allowed to marry because they cannot procreate and form stable families. But thousands of committed lesbian and gay couples raise their own children in loving households. Moreover, our society has never made procreation a prerequisite for marriage.

Mr. Kurtz also argues that allowing gay people to marry one another would undermine the already weakened institution of marriage by inviting promiscuity into it. But committed same-sex couples pose no threat to the institution, which has already been weakened by the easy exit of no-fault divorce and by the pervasiveness of spousal abuse. By Mr. Kurtz's own standard, lesbian couples would strengthen marriage since on the whole they are not promiscuous.

Finally, Mr. Kurtz claims that equality for lesbian and gay families would require the state to legalize polygamy. But this is, so to speak, a lavender herring. The reason the state recognizes and regulates marriage is to reward and reinforce commitments that promote unity between two people, which both historians and sociologists have found to be common among lesbians and gay men. History tentatively suggests that three is a crowd, with plural wives being the big losers.

William Eskridge
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

To the Editor:

Contrary to Stanley N. Kurtz, I believe that legalizing same-sex unions would actually strengthen, rather than threaten, the institution of marriage. The importance of marriage is diminished whenever a lesser relationship is afforded the same rewards as marriage. Currently, for instance, some companies extend medical coverage to the "significant others" of their employees. A large number of those obtaining benefits under these provisions are homosexual partners who do not have the option of getting married. But if every couple, heterosexual or homosexual, that seeks marital benefits is required to enter into a civil marriage, the paramount status of marriage over other arrangements will be enhanced.

Common-law marriage—under which a couple is deemed to be married if both parties agree to the arrangement—is no longer sanctioned in most states,

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largely because of its legal ambiguity. A similar problem exists in the case of "significant others." How long must two people live together for them to achieve significant-other status? Can one gain this status from a nonexclusive sexual relationship?

By requiring all persons seeking the benefits of marriage to assume the obligations contained in the marriage contract, we can restore marriage to its original purpose—not only to provide a better environment for child-rearing, but also to afford the rights of support, nurture, and inheritance to the marital partner.

VICTOR STEIN
Caldwell, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR:

Stanley N. Kurtz's "What Is Wrong with Gay Marriage" does a disservice to the institution of marriage and to gay families. Mr. Kurtz defends the Western ideal of marriage against polygamy by arguing that "anything other than monogamy would fatally undercut the primacy of the individual." This emphasis on individualism obscures the fundamental reason that most people get married: because they wish to live as part of a *couple*.

While Mr. Kurtz is right to point out that complementarity is part of what makes living as a couple a desirable arrangement, his implication that complementarity in marriage arises necessarily out of the differences between men and women does not follow. The real source of it is differences of temperament, preference, and talent that are not essentially linked to sex at all.

The idea that heterosexual marriage joins complementary partners while homosexual unions unite clones reflects an unfounded stereotype about gay couples and smacks of the kind of antigay sentiment that Mr. Kurtz is so eager to deny at the outset of his article.

TIMOTHY D. LYTTON
Albany Law School
Albany, New York

TO THE EDITOR:

I read with some interest Stanley N. Kurtz's article on gay marriage, but I cannot help concluding that he totally misses the point. One must remember that all state-sponsored financial benefits for, and protections of, married couples predate the existence of effective birth control, and were designed both to subsidize the expenses of those who produced the next generation and encourage two-parent families. Now that bearing and raising children have become a choice rather than the inevitable consequence of sexual relations, it would be logical for the state to get out of the marriage business altogether. If the health insurance or tax benefits married couples receive were redefined as child-subsidy benefits, we would be putting our money and protections where they belong.

For childless couples, gay or straight, that wish to enter a legally binding financial relationship, the state could provide "civil-union" contracts. If such couples wanted to call themselves "married," and some religious body chose to sanctify whatever relationship existed, that would be none of the state's business, since no state-provided benefits would accrue. Once children of the union were produced or adopted, state benefits, restrictions, and protections would automatically apply.

In short, while the state has a vital interest in the raising of the next generation, it has none at all in what happens between consenting adults.

JEFFREY GREENHUT
Rockville, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR:

Stanley N. Kurtz is very effective in exposing the weak premises of supporters of same-sex marriage and explaining how they open the door to other "innovations," such as polyamory. He correctly grasps that the real issues in the debate are "the fundamental questions of what marriage is, and what it is for," rejecting attempts by proponents of same-sex unions to define marriage in terms of civil rights and equality.

On the other hand, I find Mr. Kurtz's regard for marriage as a purely social construct to be troubling. As he puts it, "Historically, certain human communities have decided that this particular form of personal alliance between a man and a woman both needs and deserves societal encouragement." He seems to shy away from a more robust affirmation that marriage is an expression of human nature.

If one defines marriage in purely historical and functional terms, then the problems that have plagued marriage historically, like its hierarchical aspects, almost necessarily become part of one's definition of what marriage really is. Yet if one steps back from the mixed record of history and looks for the core of what marriage is, I believe one finds a union of male and female uniquely designed for procreation, the nurture of children, and the connection of families across generations.

DAVID ORGON COOLIDGE
Marriage Law Project
Columbus School of Law
The Catholic University of America
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR:

Stanley N. Kurtz has produced a fine and important discussion of the problems with gay marriage. Unfortunately, he ignores an important part of the ongoing debate.

There has been an attempt to enlist quantitative social science to support the legitimation of gay marriage. Simply put, a growing body of research literature has been marshaled that purports to show that gays or lesbians, whether singly or in whatever combination, are as fit as their heterosexual counterparts to raise children. The claim is further pressed that children raised in such arrangements grow up to be well-adjusted adults and are no more likely to become gay themselves than are children raised by heterosexual parents.

This view, revolutionary in its implications, was unheard of even five years ago, but is now held by many social scientists. In a recent issue of *Contemporary Sociology*, Judith Stacey writes that "thus far the research on the effects of lesbian parenting on child development is remarkably positive." In her book, *The Nurture Assumption*, the psychologist Judith Rich Harris is even more emphatic, claiming that "children with two parents of the same gender are as well adjusted as children with one of each kind."

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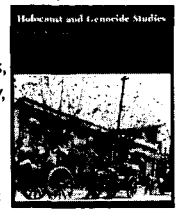

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But the research in question does not stand up to critical scrutiny. In a recent study, I analyzed the design, methods, and results of 49 published academic studies that claim to find no difference between children raised by homosexual and heterosexual parents. My conclusion: the methods used in these studies are flawed.

First, almost all the gay-parenting studies examine young children, not teenagers or young adults. Second, except for one study, they fail to follow these young children into adulthood. Third, the studies differ radically on what constitutes the proper subject of research. Some report on lesbian mothers with children from a previous heterosexual marriage; others on lesbian mothers with children from donor insemination; and still others on gay fathers. Some have no comparison group of heterosexual parents; others compare lesbian mothers to divorced single heterosexual mothers; still others compare lesbian families to heterosexual couples with children from donor-insemination.

Moreover, many studies select their subjects through homosexual-rights groups, gay-lesbian parenting networks, or the local university campus—and thus rely on people who have a large stake in the "right" research outcome. Finally, most researchers fail to control statistically for income, occupation, or education—to name a few standard variables—and all the studies suffer from samples so small that the investigator is almost guaranteed to find no statistically significant differences among children raised by homosexual parents.

It is this body of statistically invalid, scientifically distorted, but politically correct research that has been pressed into service in custody disputes, adoption cases, and, most importantly, in the quest for the legitimation of gay marriage.

ROBERT LERNER
Rockville, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR

Some years ago, the Reform movement's Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) appointed a special committee to examine the issue of homosexual marriage. Although the committee, like CCAR itself, accepted homosexuality, its report opposed the rabbinical endorsement of homosexual marriage on the grounds that such unions are incapable of realizing the uniquely sacred marital *mitzvah* (commandment) of creating the next generation. At CCAR's annual meeting, however, the committee's recommendation was overruled.

In response to this vote, I wrote "Homosexuality: A Political Mask for Promiscuity: A Psychiatrist Reviews the Data," which appeared in the January 2000 issue of *Tradition* (an Orthodox journal), and supports many of Stanley N. Kurtz's conclusions. In particular, and despite the CCAR committee's repeated assertions of its belief in homosexual fidelity, my article cites two pairs of investigators—homosexuals themselves—who found an almost total absence of fidelity among the gay couples they interviewed. Of 156 couples in one study, only seven, none of them together for more than five years, had had a totally exclusive relationship. The other study concluded that "the cheating ratio of 'married' gay males, given enough time, approached 100 percent." Indeed, Andrew Sullivan, the leading gay apologist, places sexual "freedom" ahead of fidelity, even within gay marriage, when he writes that "there is more likely to be greater understanding of the *need* [emphasis added] for extramarital outlets between two men than between a man and a woman," and again, "The lack of children gives gay couples greater freedom."

NATHANIEL S. LEHRMAN, M.D.
Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR:

Stanley N. Kurtz's potent article reminds us that the politics of gay marriage is the culmination on the one hand of the depathologizing of homosexuality by the American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychological Association, and on the other of the blessing of gay weddings by several religious denominations. In their approval of homosexuality, the two professional associations and the various religious groups have demonstrated not only their liberal sexual mores but also their cowardice in the face of being labeled homophobic.

ROBERT LYON
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR:

I found Stanley Kurtz's article to be the most cogent, balanced, and insightful piece I have ever read on the subject of same-sex unions. I had no idea that the radical proponents of gay marriage are arguing for far more than even they may realize. Thank you for alerting those of us who have remained blissfully ignorant of what is going on in this particular theater of the culture wars.

JOHN A. PUMMELL
Heidelberg, Germany

TO THE EDITOR:

Many thanks for publishing Stanley N. Kurtz's penetrating article on the subject of gay marriage. I too am mystified as to why the general public, and the Jewish community in particular, have embraced the gay-rights agenda so fully. Fear of being called homophobic is certainly one reason, but I believe another reason is the failure to understand that homosexuality is not inborn and is therefore treatable.

ELAINE SILIDOR-BERK
Jews Offering New Alternatives to Homosexuality
Jersey City, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR:

The careful explanation by Stanley N. Kurtz of the difficulties with gay marriage is a model of lucid and profound argumentation. The key problem, as he correctly notes, is the definition of marriage as a human right. If it is regarded as a right rather than as a desirable form of social organization, then marriage cannot be denied to anyone, save children: not to gays, and not to a man wanting to marry three women, or a woman wanting to marry three men, or a father wanting to marry his daughter.

Polygyny (a man with more than one wife) exists in many societies, but as Mr. Kurtz points out, they are societies in which group or clan rule dominates individual preferences and, as he could also have pointed out, in which men acquire wives as symbols of world-

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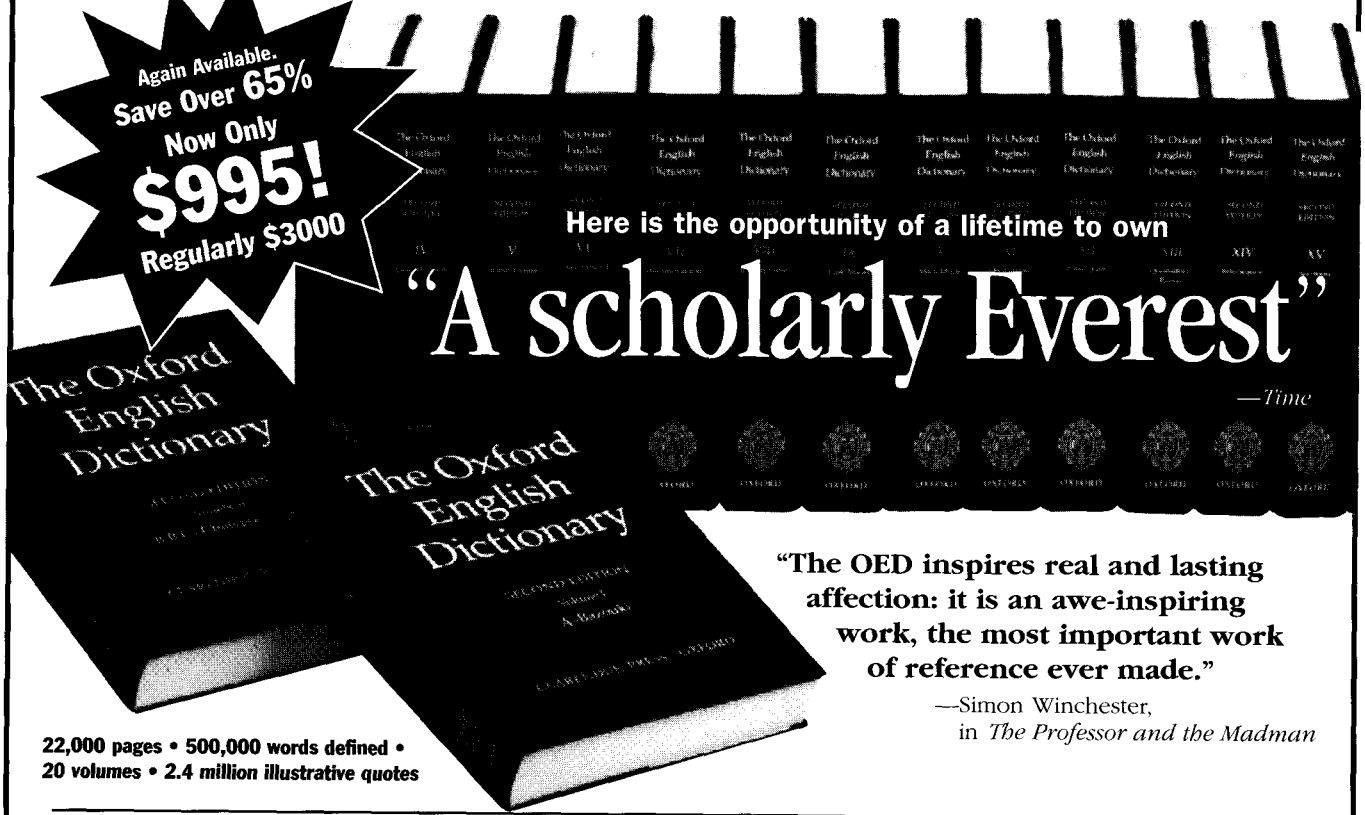

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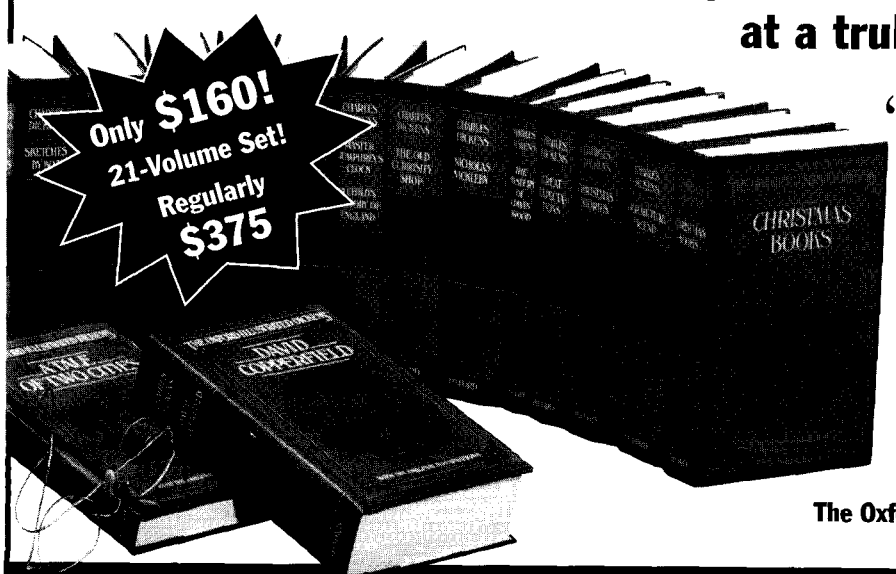

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ly success. I doubt that many of the scholars, such as the late Jesse Bernard, who have favored marital communes or ménages à trois would want to live in such places.

Marriage existed initially to manage property and care for children. Today, the property basis has been weakened, but the child-rearing one has not.

My only trivial quarrel with Mr. Kurtz is to suggest that, contrary to what he asserts, polyandry (a woman with several husbands) has rarely existed, and when it has, as in certain remote Himalayan communities, it has come into being only for extreme reasons.

JAMES Q. WILSON
Pepperdine University
Malibu, California

STANLEY N. KURTZ writes:

William Eskridge attempts to deflect attention from the core contradiction in arguments by "conservative" advocates of gay marriage such as himself and Andrew Sullivan. But the problem will not go away. Championing an infinitely flexible right to reconfigure marriage does not comport with a defense of marriage as a tested and proven social institution, particularly when there is so much reason to believe that a change in the definition of marriage will undermine, rather than promote, its beneficial effects.

Mr. Eskridge is correct to say that many lesbian couples reject the notion of sexual complementarity. That is exactly the problem. Sexual complementarity is a central pillar of marital stability, and yet, as I pointed out in my article, many of even the most committed and nonpromiscuous lesbian couples look forward to same-sex marriage as a way of "subverting" sexual complementarity—and through it, the institution of marriage itself. As described in Mr. Eskridge's own book, even Ninia Baehr, who brought the historic Hawaii gay-marriage case to court, was inclined to think of marriage as an oppressive institution, and was more interested in making a public statement about homosexuality than in promoting marriage.

Moreover, Mr. Eskridge's claim that "committed same-sex couples" would not undermine marriage begs the fundamental question. How many same-sex couples who married would *be* "committed," in the sense that we now understand that term? Since even many monogamous lesbian couples view marriage as oppressive and, as Nathaniel S. Lehrman correctly points out, many more gay male couples do not identify commitment with monogamy, that does not leave much room for the ethos of traditional marriage. As Gretchen Stiers's important study (cited in my article) demonstrates, many gay couples will marry strictly for the legal and financial benefits. Thus, contrary to Victor Stein, economic incentives will not spread the traditional marital ethos but simply draw gay couples into marriage without fundamentally changing the social and sexual dynamics of their relationships.

Mr. Eskridge's jaundiced description of the hierarchical complementarity within marriage fails to grasp the lived complexity of male-female relations, in which both a man and a woman serve one another—although in different ways and in different contexts. While there is a sense in which men "possess" women, there is also a sense in which, through the very act of allowing themselves to be possessed, women "tame" and possess their men.

I agree with Timothy D. Lytton that all couples are in some respects complementary. It could also be said that all couples are in some respects alike. But none of this changes the fact that male/female complementarity is more pronounced than the same-sex variety, or that the specific

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form of heterosexual complementarity tends to maximize marital stability. In this connection, incidentally, although David Orgon Coolidge is correct to argue that some aspects of this sexual hierarchy are outdated, the truth is that much of the traditional male/female dynamic remains strong.

Contrary to Mr. Lytton, the fact that married partners form a couple does nothing to gainsay the importance of individualism in the formation of Western families. It is our yearning for freedom that draws us into independent alliances with self-chosen and unique others, rather than alliances with multiple marital partners under the influence of our extended kin. In fact, this individualistic propensity reaches its apex in calls, like that of Jeffrey Greenhut, for the effective abolition of marriage and conversion to a series of flexible, individually arranged contracts. Mr. Greenhut is honest about the radical program that stands behind the move for gay marriage, but he is mistaken to argue that the state can protect children without caring about the nature of the relationship between their parents.

Robert Lerner's important and persuasive critique of the literature on child-rearing among gay couples demonstrates why we cannot rely on the studies undertaken so far. Unfortunately, the policy debates are moving so swiftly that we will need to make fundamental decisions about what is best for our children well before the definitive studies come in.

Nothing in my case against gay marriage requires assent to the notion that homosexuality is a clinical pathology. Robert Lyon may pursue the point, but its resolution is not essential to the policy issue at stake. In general, my view is that we can relax the social taboo on homosexuality without abandoning special support and encouragement for heterosexual marriage.

Finally, James Q. Wilson rightly identifies my basic aim: shifting the ground of the debate over gay marriage away from claims of infinitely flexible "rights" and symbolic statements about homosexuality and toward a discussion of the impact of this proposed reform upon the institution of marriage itself. In this regard, William Eskridge is surely wrong to suggest that extending the right to marry to gay couples would not entail legalizing polyamorous unions. Once we begin to redefine marriage in terms of our common humanity and the right to equal benefits, the process will not stop.

Jewish Genes

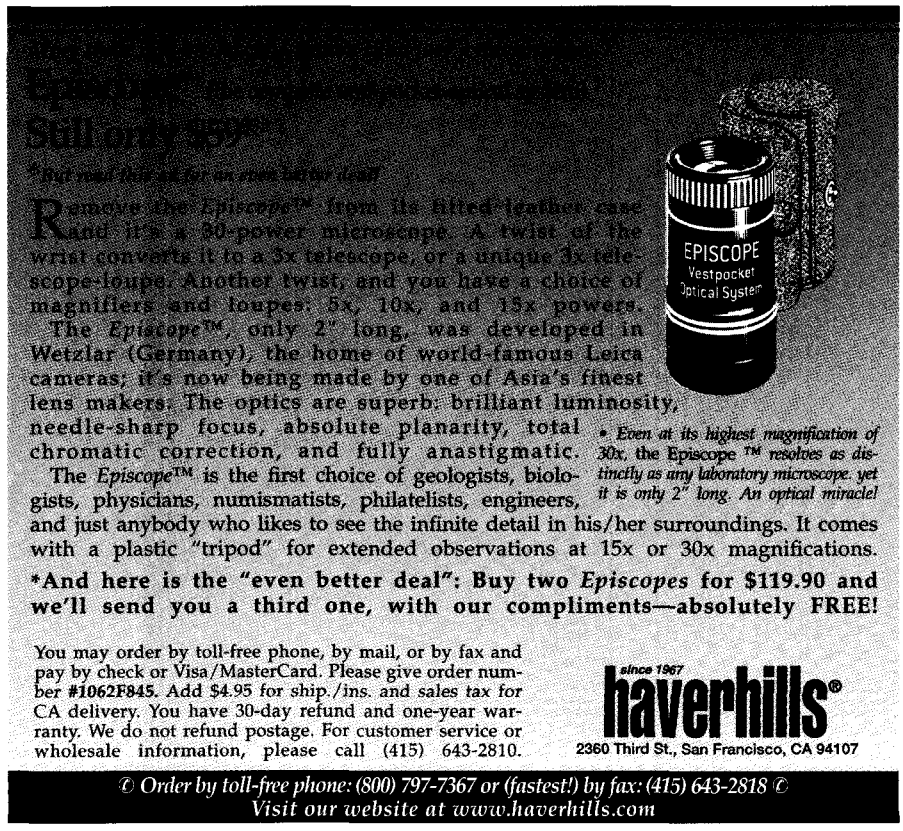
TO THE EDITOR:

If, as Hillel Halkin argues, Ashkenazi Jews are more genetically related to Arabs than to Europeans ["Wandering Jews—and Their Genes," September], why do I and my Jewish brothers and cousins not have Middle Eastern complexions? One possible explanation is that Jews have adapted to their surroundings. Americans of seventh-generation, undiluted English ancestry look much different from Englishmen in East Anglia today, and I can tell a Chinese immigrant from a third-generation Chinese-American in a flash. For similar reasons, Jews generally look like the population of the country they came from. Russian Jewish immigrants living in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn look Russian while Uzbeki Jews in Queens look Asian Turkic.

RICHARD T. RESNICK
Staten Island, New York

TO THE EDITOR:

In discussing the passage of time since the common ancestor of today's *kohanim* (who are presumably descendants of "the priestly clan originating in Moses and Aaron"), Hillel Halkin states that 1180 B.C.E. is close to when the historical Moses would have lived. In



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fact, most mainstream scholars put Moses' lifetime between 1550 and 1450 B.C.E By Mr. Halkin's reasoning, we now live close to the time of Columbus, who was alive only 500 years ago.

ROBERT POLLACK
St. Johnsbury, Vermont

TO THE EDITOR:

"Wandering Jews—and Their Genes" deals well with a complex subject. But Mr. Halkin's interpretations of the recent findings on Middle Eastern Y chromosomes are open to question.

He claims that, according to the study by Michael Hammer, the patterns of Y-chromosome markers in many Jewish populations show a high degree of similarity, despite the significant geographical and cultural separation of those populations. But this is an oversimplification of Hammer's actual results, based on the statistical dominance of something called the Med genetic marker that appears on the Y chromosome. As Hammer points out, the "widespread distribution and relatively recent age [of Med] suggest high rates of male gene flow around the Mediterranean and into Europe." Effectively, this gene-flow process is merely background noise that must be filtered out in order to detect the underlying variations between European and Mediterranean population groups. For when one removes the dominance of the Med marker, the pattern of Y-chromosome markers in the Ashkenazi population in Hammer's study is distinctly different from other Jewish populations. Further investigation must attempt to define the source of this difference.

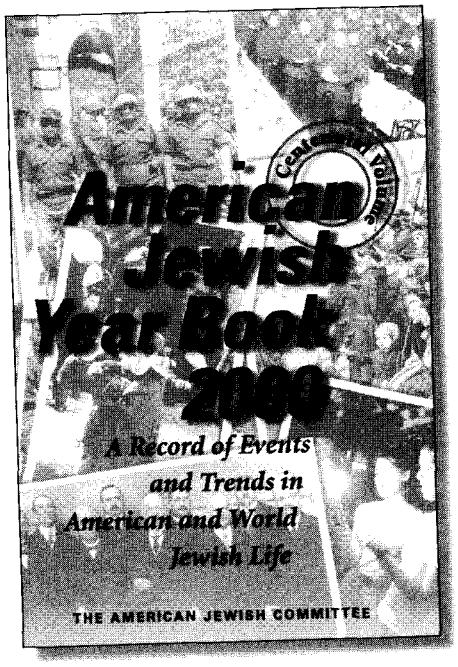
As for the claim that Jewish populations were relatively isolated from admixture, the Jewish law of matrilineal descent provides an interesting counterpoint. This law, with its rather ambiguous biblical origin, was reaffirmed over the centuries by rabbinic authorities. The rabbis presumably found it necessary to maintain it because one always knows a child's mother, even if one is uncertain of the father. But if the rabbis had to legislate in favor of exclusively maternal descent, then there must have been historic cases of non-Jewish paternity, the evidence for which should show up in the Y chromosomes.

DANIEL FRIEDMAN
Houston, Texas

TO THE EDITOR:

I found Hillel Halkin's "Wandering Jews—and Their Genes" to be a perceptive and fair treatment of the question of Jewish origins. As Mr. Halkin notes, the traditional view that Franco-Rhenish Jews formed the majority of East European Jewry is questionable on both demographic and linguistic grounds. I count myself among the challengers. Thanks to the research of Alexander Beider, it is now known that the earliest Polish and Silesian Jews had Slavic given names and originated in the Czech lands. It has also been established that Yiddish has strong affinities to southern and eastern German dialects, Bavarian in particular. Demographically, evidence shows that Jews from Italy, Greece, and Khazarian Crimea all contributed to the East European Jewish ethnogenesis. Yaffa Eliach, in her book *There Once Was a World*, argues that Babylonia was a point of origin for the earliest Lithuanian Jews. In fact, a variant form of the Med genetic marker is found among Ashkenazi Jews, Iraqi Jews, and Armenians, and the *kohen* modal haplotype exists among Armenians as well as European Jews.

As I documented in my book, *The Jews of Khazaria*, Jews from Greece, Armenia, and Mesopotamia resettled in the Khazar kingdom on the Russian steppes over the course of many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centuries. They were responsible for the popularization of the Hebrew alphabet and Jewish religion among the Khazars. Evidence is mounting that substantial Jewish communities existed in Khazaria. For instance, at a 1999 conference in Jerusalem, Gennadii Afanasyev revealed that Hebrew letters spelling "Israel" have been found engraved on utensils from a Khazar site in the Don valley.

Recently, a leading expert on Jewish names, Avraham Torpusman, has argued that some of the earliest Jews in Kiev living under Khazar rule were descended from Israelite Jews who had adopted local given names (like Gostyata) from the surrounding Slavs. But the situation appears to be more complicated. One could argue that the male lineages of these Jews were Israelite (thereby explaining the presence of Levite and *kohen*ite titles among them) but their female lineages were Khazarian (thereby explaining the Turkic elements of their names).

It is unfortunate that recent genetic studies do not actually test the Khazar hypothesis more directly. Michael Hammer's sample includes Anatolian Turks but not North Caucasian Turks, Tatars, or Chuvashes, nor were DNA samples extracted from Khazarian skeletons for comparative purposes. It is my understanding that Khazar DNA is being studied at the present time in Russia. More research is needed before we can come to solid conclusions about Ashkenazi origins.

KEVIN ALAN BROOK
Danbury, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR:

I support Hillel Halkin's call for a clarification of the Turkish material that was used in the recent comparative study of the Y chromosomes of various Jewish and contiguous non-Jewish groups. Like Mr. Halkin, I wonder whether it was Anatolian material, possibly influenced by Anatolian-Greek, and therefore perhaps too dissimilar to the Central Asian Turkic profile to sustain the notion that there might have been "a Khazar contribution to East European Jewry."

Not only could such a clarification shed light on the Khazar hypothesis, but it might also expose a possible Turkic connection in the high correlation of genetic material between most Jews and Palestinian Arabs, Lebanese, and Syrians. I have in mind the Kipchack Turks, better known as Cumans, who were closely and positively associated with steppe-land Jews in the 11th and 12th centuries, and who may have supplied charter members to the nascent Ashkenazi society that began to coalesce in the following centuries. As it happens, a largely Cuman slave-warrior caste ruled the Mamluk state (which included Egypt, Palestine, and Syria) from the mid-13th to the late 14th century, and there may have been a substantial ethnogenetic impact on the region's older inhabitants. Any productive examination of Inner Asian Turkic genetic profiles should include Lithuanian Tatars and Nogai Tatars.

HERBERT GUY ZEIDEN
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR:

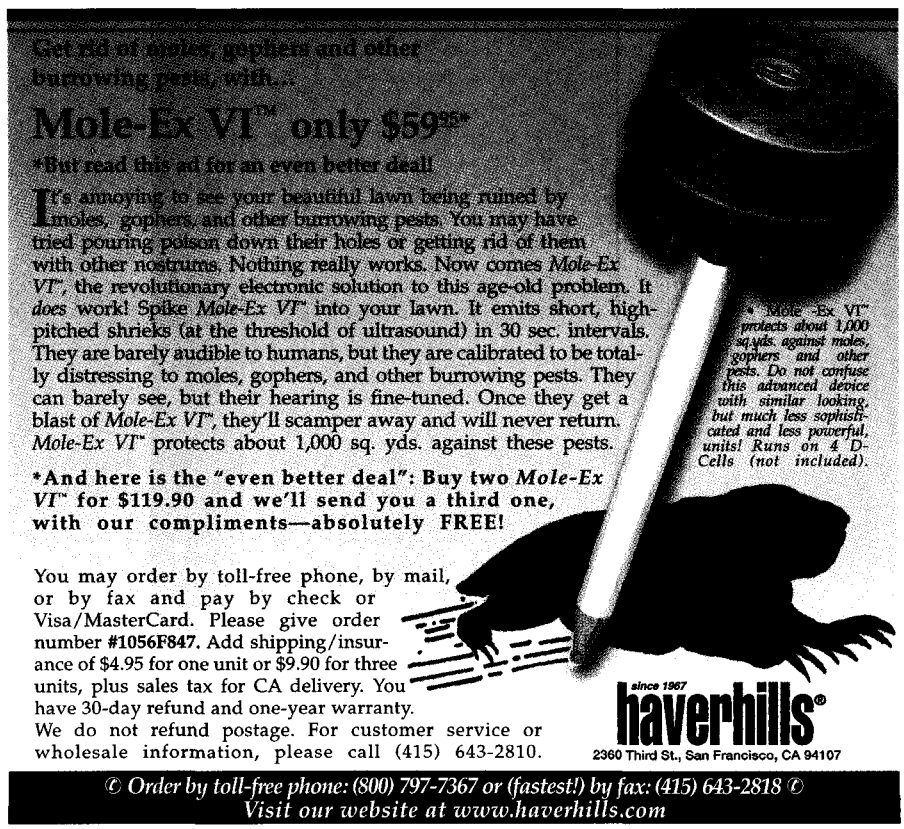
When analyzing the relation of Jews and Arabs, lumping together Ashkenazim, Sephardim, and other Oriental Jews is not entirely appropriate. A more differentiated approach would seem to be warranted since Ashkenazim have more foreign admixture than most of the other Jewish ethnic groups. This also corresponds to the fact that, among self-declared *kohanim* in both groups, Sephardim have more *kohanim* markers (percentage-wise) than Ashkenazim.

Mr. Halkin should be greatly praised for his very interesting review of new genetic research into wandering Jews.

RUDY J. BUDESKY
El Cerrito, California

HILLEL HALKIN writes:

If by "adapted to their surroundings" Richard T. Resnick means that Jews as individuals are influenced physically by their environ-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ment, and is not referring to some Lamarckian translation of environmental influences into genetic makeup, I agree with him wholeheartedly. Our faces are not merely the product of the physiognomy we were born with; they are also molded by the muscles used in articulating our speech, the facial expressions we imitate and adopt, the emotions our culture encourages us to reveal or to conceal, and so forth. This is what makes it possible for Mr. Resnick to distinguish "a Chinese immigrant from a third-generation Chinese-American." Although not everyone has it to the same degree, there is definitely such a thing as an American, a French, a Russian, and an Israeli "look" that one can amuse oneself by trying to identify in an international airport, and no doubt most Jews who "look Russian" because they were born and raised in Russia would look just as American if born and raised in America.

Since many biblical scholars no longer believe that a historical Moses lived at all, I am not sure there is a "mainstream position" on dating his career, but to the extent that something like one exists, it places Moses a good 200 years later than Robert Pollack does—that is, roughly between 1350 and 1250 B.C.E. In any case, I can assure Mr. Pollack that if history is still being written 3,000 years from now, he *will* be considered to have lived fairly close to the time of Columbus.

No one would deny Daniel Friedman's statement that "the pattern of Y chromosomes in the Ashkenazi population in Hammer's study is distinctly different from [that of] other Jewish populations." Hammer makes this point himself. But the more important point is that this difference is significantly smaller than that among non-Jews coming from the same countries, so that a Russian Jew and a Moroccan Jew tend to have more similar Y chromosomes than do a Russian Christian and a Moroccan Muslim.

As for matrilineal descent, although its adoption by rabbinic law certainly reflects a concern with possible Jewish-Gentile liaisons, there is nothing in either Jewish sources or the Hammer study—in which "evidence for historic cases of non-Jewish paternity" certainly does show up in all Jewish populations tested—to indicate that such relationships were particularly widespread in any specific place or period. Nor does this study tell us, as Rudy Budesky seems to think, that Ashkenazim "have more foreign admixture" than non-Ashkenazim. It tells us only that Ashkenazim have less of a Mediterranean gene profile, which would be the case even if the percentage of Jewish-Gentile marriages in Ashkenazi Europe were no higher than in southern Europe and the Middle East, since in the latter regions the non-Jewish partner would have had a Mediterranean gene profile, too.

I agree with Kevin Alan Brook and Herbert Guy Zeiden that more research is needed on the subject of a partial Khazar origin for Ashkenazi Jewry. The many Jewish historians who have dismissed such a possibility have had their reasons, not all of them bad ones, but we now have the genetic means to reexamine the question.

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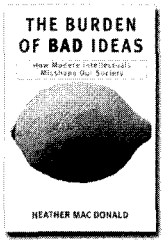

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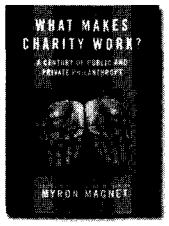

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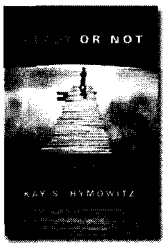

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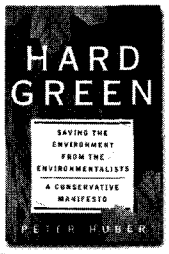

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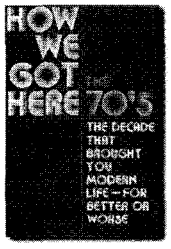

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Boys

TO THE EDITOR:

Chester E. Finn, Jr. makes many perceptive points in his review of Christina Hoff Sommers's insightful new book, *The War Against Boys* [Books in Review, September]. He hits the nail on the head, for example, when he writes, "In getting a good education and growing up to become solid citizens, *both* [boys and girls] must overcome major hurdles."

Unfortunately, Mr. Finn underestimates the serious psychiatric disorders of many boys today. These often chronic problems require much more than "get-

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ting extra attention," as Mr. Finn suggests, and sometimes necessitate the use of psychotropic medication. His notion that teachers, doctors, and parents are involved in a kind of conspiracy to drug children in order to meet some ideological need is nonsense. (It is hard enough to get a child to take the eight days' worth of antibiotics required to cure some infections.)

Gender stereotypes can indeed have harmful effects on the diagnosis and treatment of troubled youngsters. For instance, elementary-school girls who suffer from severe forms of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder are often mislabeled as flighty or ditzy. On the other hand, in almost every category of psychiatric illness, boys have far outnumbered girls since long before the onset of politically correct fads. Criminologists find that about 6 percent of boys in America commit 50 percent of the crimes. The problems of these boys are often apparent in the early years of elementary school, and can frequently be traced to abusive, neglectful, and chaotic families.

STEVEN J. CERESNIE, M.D.
Plymouth, Michigan

TO THE EDITOR:

Chester E. Finn, Jr. fails to question Christina Hoff Sommers's notion that males and females "are essentially different," and that many of their interests, preferences, and behaviors are biological in nature. Just as feminists like Carol Gilligan attribute characteristics like competitiveness and aggressiveness entirely to social forces (or nurture), Sommers claims they are almost exclusively the result of nature.

Both schools of thought ignore that which primarily determines the character of all human beings—their free will. In fact, Sommers never even mentions independent thought as a value we should instill in our children.

JOSEPH KELLARD
Oceanside, New York

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What are the facts?

The Birth of a Dream. The return to Zion had for 2,000 years been the dream of Europe's dispersed Jews, the only hope in their miserable lives. "Next year in Jerusalem" had always been the watchword. But nothing was done to bring this dream to reality. Theodor Herzl organized the first Zionist Congress in Basel (Switzerland) in 1897 and political Zionism was born.

The concept of creating a new nation in what was then a sparsely-settled country was something totally new, never before attempted in the history of mankind. But Herzl's vision fired up world Jewry and especially the Jews of eastern Europe, who were despairing under the yoke of Russian oppression and recurring pogroms. Energized by Zionist aspirations, British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour issued his famous Declaration in 1917, by which Palestine was established as a national home for the Jewish people. In 1922, the League of Nations entrusted Britain with the Mandate for Palestine. Regrettably, and contrary to the Balfour Declaration and the requirement of the Mandate, Britain decided that the provisions for setting up a Jewish national home would not apply east of the Jordan River. That area constituted three-fourths of the territory of the Mandate and eventually became the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan. Only one-quarter of Palestine remained to fulfill the Jewish dream.

A Nation is Born and Succeeds. The modern state of Israel was founded in May 1948, almost exactly fifty years ago—fifty years after Herzl formulated the concept. Immediately upon its creation, the country was invaded by the armies of five Arab countries. With a total Jewish population of only about 650,000, and with limited armaments and resources, the ragtag army of Israel defeated the combined might of the aggressors and established itself firmly within its boundaries. Transjordan (now renamed Jordan) stayed in possession of Judea/Samaria (now known as the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem. Egypt occupied the Gaza Strip. The price was very high. In this bloodiest of wars imposed on Israel, over 6,000 citizen-soldiers died -- over 1% of the population. It is as if the United States were to suffer a loss of close to 3 million people! It was not the only war that its neighbors visited on Israel. In the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel once again prevailed; it repossessed Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), the eastern part of Jerusalem, and conquered the vast Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights. And once more, in 1973, the Arabs tried to destroy Israel in the Yom Kippur War. Once more, they suffered defeat.

> "One would think that the world, especially the emerging nations, would wish to learn from Israel's example, so as to emulate its achievement. Unfortunately, almost the exact opposite is the case."

Despite being under constant attack and siege and having suffered over 20,000 dead in those defensive wars, Israel created social and political systems and an economy that continues to amaze experts worldwide. Israel is the only truly democratic country in the entire Middle East, with governmental structure and institutions comparable to those of the United States. Its economy—despite the enormous defense expenditures mandated by the aggressiveness of its neighbors and despite the effort and expense of having absorbed more than 2.5 million immigrants (four times the population at the creation of the state)—can only be described as a miracle of human accomplishment. Virtually everything—infrastructure such as roads, railroads, ports, airports, water carriers, electricity stations and distribution networks—had to be built from a minimal base. Today, Israel's economy is booming. It is a leader in high-tech technology; it has created one of the most advanced agricultural systems in the world; it is one of world leaders in economic growth rate; it has one of the highest per-capita incomes in the world; and it is the world leader in exports per capita.

We have in this century seen the demise of many "isms", the most prominent failures being those of Communism and Nazism. But Zionism, the national movement of the Jewish people, has flourished despite incredible obstacles—to an extent that the visionary Theodor Herzl could not have possibly imagined 100 years ago. One would think that the world, especially the emerging nations, would wish to learn from Israel's example, so as to emulate its achievements. Unfortunately, almost the exact opposite is the case. Goaded by the Arab nations, inalterably hostile to Israel and single-mindedly dedicated to its destruction, the United Nations has offered more than 100 resolutions censuring and condemning Israel's actions.

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CONTROVERSY

Controlling Guns

Gary Rosen & Critics

MICHAEL BEARD:

In "Yes and No to Gun Control" [September], Gary Rosen cites a study purporting to show that Americans use guns in self-defense as many as 2.5 million times a year. This figure, although popular with the pro-gun crowd because it appears to justify the unlimited distribution of guns, has been demolished by impartial researchers, who have shown it to be a gross exaggeration. A more rigorous study, the National Crime Victimization Survey, found that guns are used in self-defense approximately 108,000 times per year. In an average year, guns are also used to kill over 30,000 Americans and wound some 90,000 others, and to commit 1.3 million crimes. All told, gun violence costs the U.S. $100 billion annually.

America's patchwork of gun control laws is not adequate. There are only a few modest federal laws, and laws vary widely at the state level. States like New York have been aggressive in regulating guns within their own borders, yet can only watch helplessly as 67 percent of guns used in crime come from out of state.

The Brady Act, which requires licensed dealers to conduct background checks on all gun purchasers, does not address the secondary firearms market, which accounts for approximately 40 percent of the 10 million transfers of guns each year. These secondary sales go on at gun shows, in kitchens, and on street corners and are not subject to background checks or waiting periods. I agree with Mr. Rosen that these secondary firearms transactions should also be subjected to a background check.

A national system of handgun licensing and registration would be the most effective mechanism to reduce gun violence. Licensing would ensure that all handgun purchasers have undergone a background check and, as with drivers' licenses, passed a competency test. Handgun registration would promote responsibility by creating a record of ownership and, like automobile registration, would allow law enforcement quickly to trace guns used in crime.

Mr. Rosen is right that the proposed registration system would apply only to new handguns. But this would not render registration ineffective, as he suggests. The Department of Justice reports that 40 percent of U.S. handguns traced in crime are less than three years old. America's gun problem centers not on a family hunting rifle that has been locked away for years but rather on a handgun that is sold today from a licensed gun dealer.

Gun control cannot prevent all gun deaths, just as seat belts do not prevent all deaths in car crashes. Yet effective gun measures like licensing and registration will go a long way to reducing gun violence.

President
Coalition to Stop Gun Violence
Washington, D.C.

ERIC GOROVITZ:

Gary Rosen raises some important questions about the gun-policy debate and tries to offer well-reasoned arguments. Still, he ignores or trivializes several key points.

Mr. Rosen correctly notes that the gun-policy debate has heated up at a time of declining rates of violent crime and gun death. But he fails to discuss the dramatic and alarming spike in the death toll that

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preceded this period. In 1985, 31,566 Americans died of gunshot wounds. In 1998, the latest year for which data are available and the low point in the downward trend that Mr. Rosen extols, guns took 30,708 American lives. In the intervening years, nearly half a million of our fellow citizens were killed by guns, leaving us back where we started 15 years ago—with an unacceptable toll of preventable death.

As for suicide, Mr. Rosen is wrong in stating that "there is no reason to think that its likelihood is higher because of the widespread availability of guns." Roughly 56 percent of all gun deaths are suicides, and any serious prevention effort must address the role of guns. Suicide attempts by most other means usually fail, while attempts with firearms are almost always lethal. Access to a gun at a moment of transient despondency turns a cry for help into a dead end.

Next, Mr. Rosen offers Switzerland, Norway, and Israel as examples of countries with high rates of gun-ownership and low rates of violent crime, in support of his argument that guns "in no sense *generate* . . . violence" (emphasis in the original). But he does not point out that Switzerland prohibits gun-owners from having continuous access to their ammunition, which is stored under government seal and inspected regularly. Or that Israel's gun-ownership is directly connected to its constant state of war, and that most gun-owners are trained military personnel. Or that Norway's high rate of civilian gun-ownership is accompanied by a high rate of suicide.

Moreover, Mr. Rosen does not mention that most gun crimes in the U.S. occur between people who know each other, and that many of these shootings result from the escalation of otherwise nonlethal conflicts. This is especially clear in the context of domestic violence. Nearly a third of female homicide victims are killed by a current or former husband or boyfriend, and two-thirds of those deaths result from gunshots.

Finally, Mr. Rosen suggests that efforts to regulate the safety of gun designs are misguided. In any other industry, however, no one would object to requiring manufacturers to repair design defects directly responsible for preventable deaths. But guns are the only consumer product sold in America without any safety-related oversight. Guns are made and sold that predictably fire when dropped, that fall apart during use, and that conceal live ammunition with no indication of their lethal potential. Gun companies have known for a century how to fix these problems, but have chosen to ignore them.

Policy Director
Million Mom March Foundation
San Francisco, California

DAVID J. STEINBERG:

Guns may not be the only weapons used in violent crime, as Gary Rosen observes, but their unique technology and extraordinary potential justify rules that do not apply to other devices. When soldiers are inducted into the United States Army, they are issued uniforms and eating utensils, no guns or ammunition. They first have to be trained in the responsible handling of such weapons. One can imagine the casualties long before combat if access to guns and ammunition were not strictly controlled and training for proper use were of little concern. Strict rules on civilian firearms possession are necessary as well, with appropriate allowances for the difference between military and civilian circumstances.

Moreover, to say (as does a researcher Mr. Rosen quotes without challenge) that the carrying of concealed handguns is "the most cost-effective means of reducing crime" shows no awareness that certified skills in this regard, and strict rules on the use of these weapons, are essential to public safety. Rules enforcing accountability for the safe possession and responsible use of firearms—in the home or elsewhere—would greatly improve the image (indeed, enhance the prestige) of private gun-ownership, as well as our chances for a safer society.

Former Executive Director
National Council for a Responsible Firearms Policy
Alexandria, Virginia

DANIEL C. SMOLENS:

I found Gary Rosen's probing of the many elements and implications of gun-control policies very valuable. I do not see, however, how he derives a fundamental right to own a gun from the words of the Second Amendment, which seem to tie the right to an individual's obligation to serve as a member of a common defense force.

I would suggest that prefacing the right with this condition is the same as making the right depend on the existence of situations where the country needs to be defended—and that it can be abridged when national defense has been entrusted to a professional army. In view of the carnage we now suffer because of guns, at a level unapproached by any other democratic country, I feel sure that, were they alive today, the framers of the Constitution would be crafting every possible restriction on the right "to keep and bear arms."

Brookline, Massachusetts

LARRY PRATT:

In many ways, Gary Rosen's article makes a positive contribution to the gun-control debate. He effectively demolishes some of the alleged "firearm facts" of the anti-Second Amendment gun-grabbers. And as he correctly notes with respect to the Brady Act, "the fact that individuals with a criminal record were unable to get a gun from a licensed dealer tells us nothing about whether they were *ultimately* able to get a gun" (emphasis in the original), adding that background checks are "not a solution for the 'gun problem.'"

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But then Mr. Rosen makes a shocking proposal. He says that the so-called "gun-show loophole" illustrates "the need to extend the terms of the Brady Act to *every* private transfer of a firearm, whether at a gun show or not" (emphasis in the original). This proposal reminds me of the philosopher George Santayana's definition of fanaticism: "Redoubling your efforts when you have forgotten your aim."

Despite President Clinton's repeated assertion that the Brady Act has "cut crime," this is not true. A study published in a recent issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* concluded that there is "no evidence" linking the Brady Act to a reduction in homicide rates, which were declining in the U.S. *before* the Brady Act. The authors of the study also say that their findings are consistent with most of the previous evaluations of state-level background-check and waiting-period laws. Since the Brady Act is not working, the last thing that should be done is to extend its scope. In fact, it should be repealed.

Before we follow Mr. Rosen into more gun control, he should explain how his proposal will be more effective than the gun ban currently in place in England, where the ownership of firearms is all but prohibited but the rate of violent crime now exceeds our own.

Though Mr. Rosen sees the Brady Act's instant background checks as only "a slight administrative inconvenience," they are in fact a dangerous concept. Most gun-owners see this intrusion as an easy way for the federal government to register them, and registration is a giant leap closer to a complete ban on the private ownership of firearms.

Waiting periods, background checks, taxes, fees, bans—all infringe on the right of individual citizens "to keep and bear arms," which the Second Amendment guarantees. They should thus not exist—period. Honest gun-owners should not have to request permission from, or prove their innocence to, the government before exercising a constitutional right, any more than a preacher or journalist should have to prove his worthiness before exercising his First Amendment rights.

Executive Director
Gun Owners of America
Springfield, Virginia

DAVID I. CAPLAN:

Gary Rosen's article contains several dubious arguments and proposals. He argues that the National Rifle Association (NRA) and its sympathizers are correct to interpret the Second Amendment as guaranteeing an individual right "no less fundamental than those enshrined in the First Amendment." Yet he goes on to say that "short of banning most guns," the government has "a substantial degree of latitude under the Second Amendment." Would he also say that the government has "a substantial degree of latitude" to enact restrictive regulations on the fundamental rights of free press or religion under the First Amendment? Civil libertarians would respond with a resounding no.

During the 20th century, the only ruling by the Supreme Court on the Second Amendment came in the 1939 *Miller* decision. For its central conclusion, the Court explicitly relied upon a 19th-century Tennessee case in which the state's highest court stressed that the right of the individual to "*keep*" suitable personal arms, including the right to acquire and practice with them, is an absolute, "unqualified right"—but "the right to *bear arms* is not of that unqualified character." Mr. Rosen's proposals for further controls on guns neglect this crucial distinction.

Mr. Rosen favors extending the federal Brady Act's background checks so that they apply to every gun transaction, even private ones. A big problem in this regard is that the government has interpreted the Brady Act to ban all firearm purchases whenever the background-check computers are down, as has already occurred during legitimate gun shows, effectively ruining them. This amounts to a needless prior restraint on every prospective buyer.

Moreover, extending the Brady Act to include private transfers would not touch illicit transfers. Mr. Rosen flatly asserts that enough people "would make a good-faith effort at compliance to hinder the immediate acquisition of firearms by criminals." But a substantial share of the black market's plentiful supply of firearms comes from truck hijackings and wholesale burglaries of military warehouses.

Madison, New Jersey

JAMES H. FINK:

The vast majority of firearms owners and their advocates, including the NRA, agree that no right is absolute, and that while there is a constitutional right to own firearms, it is subject to reasonable regulation. But we further assert that such restrictions must not be a pretext for banning a protected activity, much as the literacy test was once used to disqualify black voters in the South from exercising their right to vote.

Any regulation that affects firearms rights should be subject to the same heightened judicial scrutiny that is reserved for impositions on other fundamental rights. We demand that serious and skeptical consideration be given to the claim that such regulation is necessary, that the interest of the state is an important one, and that the regulations are no more extensive than they have to be to address that interest. Such regulations must be justified in spite of, not because of, their tendency to discourage the right to keep and bear arms.

Instead gun-owners have been presented with a huge laundry list of regulations that have progressively eaten away at every aspect of the right to keep and bear arms. Indirect attacks include those on ammunition, capacity, manufacturing materials, cosmetic features, and locking devices; in the latest twist,

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they also include novel lawsuits against firearms manufacturers. These regulations make it marginally more expensive to own firearms, but more importantly, put the owner in decided legal and financial jeopardy as they multiply.

In his naiveté about the gun-control movement, Gary Rosen suggests that various compromises be made by gun-owners. He argues that a national registry of firearms and their owners is doomed to failure if passed because "no viable system of registration could apply retroactively—that is, to existing firearms; the expense would be too great, not to mention the political grief of persuading (or compelling) current gun-owners to cooperate." When registration arrives, however, the bureaucrats will find the funds, and there will be draconian punishments for failure to comply. Once a few high-visibility arrests are made, many owners will fall in line.

Once registration is enacted, the crime of defending oneself from attack with an unregistered firearm will trump any other crime. It will only be a matter of time before the use of firearms for legitimate activities such as self-defense and sport so declines that the banning of firearms in America will not only be possible, it will be probable.

Mr. Rosen states that the NRA supports a "virtually absolutist rejection of any proposal for the regulation of firearms." Of course, what the NRA actually rejects is any *further* regulation of firearms, given that there are now in excess of 70,000 gun laws on the books, covering every conceivable aspect of their sale, transfer, manufacture, possession, and use. We long ago passed the point where additional regulation would advance any interest other than the de-facto banning of firearms from American life.

Lincoln, Massachusetts

JOHN R. LOTT, JR.:

Gary Rosen's piece on gun control was very thoughtful, but his discussion of a few issues requires a response. Unfortunately, laws requiring the licensing and registration of firearms are more likely to increase crime than to reduce it, and restrictions on so-called plastic guns and assault weapons—firearms concerning which, according to Mr. Rosen, "supporters of gun rights have displayed an astonishing and self-destructive obtuseness"—have both costs and benefits.

In theory, if a gun is left at the scene of a crime, licensing and registration will allow it to be traced back to its owner. But, amazingly, despite tens of thousands of man-hours spent by the police administering these laws in Hawaii (the one state with both rules), as well as the efforts of cities like Chicago and Washington, D.C. that have similar laws, there is not even a single case where licensing and registration have been instrumental in identifying someone who has committed a crime.

The reasons for this are simple. Criminals very rarely leave their guns at the scene of the crime. Moreover, would-be criminals virtually never get licenses or register their weapons.

And what of the oft-stated claim that licensing will somehow allow even more comprehensive background checks and thus keep criminals from getting guns in the first place? There is not one single academic study concluding that background checks reduce violent crime. There is also substantial evidence that even the short waiting periods that go with these laws increase the incidence of rape and that longer waiting periods increase violent crime across the board. Time spent administering these laws is time that the police do not have to do what they normally do to stop crime.

As for the hysteria over "plastic guns," it arose in the mid-1980's when the Austrian company Glock began exporting pistols to the United States. They were labeled as "terrorist specials" by the press, and fear spread that their plastic frame and grip would make them invisible to metal detectors. Unmentioned at the time was the fact that Glocks had over a pound of metal. Anyone who has ever been through a metal detector at an airport should understand how silly this fear was. Even plastic shows up on X-ray machines.

Glocks are now common and one of the favorite pistols of American police officers. They are reliable and lightweight, qualities that are also valued by many of the millions of Americans with concealed-handgun permits. Would society have been better off if the gun-control organizations pushing the original legislation had succeeded in banning Glocks?

No gun has ever been produced without metal in it, nor is there any evidence that such a gun can be made. So what did this supposedly crucial law accomplish?

The debate over so-called "assault weapons" was similarly misleading. Despite the rhetoric, these firearms are no different from other semiautomatic rifles sold in the United States. They are not more powerful, do not shoot any faster, and do not shoot any more rounds. Indeed, the particular guns that were banned use smaller cartridges—and thus possess less killing power—than standard hunting rifles.

Yale Law School
New Haven, Connecticut

STEPHEN W. BORGESS:

I am a life member of the National Rifle Association and would like to thank Gary Rosen for his thoughtful and balanced essay.

On one point, however, I must disagree with him. Mr. Rosen claims that "such menacing firearms" as assault weapons "are widely, and rightly, viewed as falling outside any reasonable recreational or protective need." He approvingly quotes Handgun Control, Inc. as asking, "Who needs an AK-47 to go duck-hunting?"

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The fact is that the Second Amendment has nothing to do with duck-hunting; indeed, if anything, menacing firearms such as assault weapons are precisely what the amendment *is* about, and the courts have sustained this view. The right to keep and bear arms concerns giving people the means to resist oppression, to defend the sanctity of their own lives against anyone or anything that seeks to violate it. You cannot do that with a duck gun.

Winchester, Virginia

JOHN F. BRINSON:

Thank you for Gary Rosen's well-reasoned article on gun control. It was especially good to see him address the fallacious statistic about "twelve children per day" being killed by guns and the absurd notion that a gun in the home is "43 times more likely" to be used for suicide or murder than self-defense—numbers that have been used to great effect by gun-control groups with the compliance of the ever-willing news media.

On another important issue, however, I must respectfully disagree. Human beings have a natural and innate right to self-defense, including the right to employ all feasible means for protecting themselves. As a practical matter, this means a right to weapons equal or superior to those of potential adversaries—criminals who today are armed with semiautomatic handguns, occasionally with rifles and shotguns, and more rarely with fully automatic submachine guns and so-called "assault" rifles.

We know that criminals are confronted by armed citizens five times more often than by police, and that the armed citizen usually wins. But I do not want to win *usually*. If I am unlucky and my family is faced by a crazed criminal, I *always* want to win.

Chairman
Lehigh Valley Firearms Coalition
Allentown, Pennsylvania

SANFORD LEVINSON:

Kudos to Gary Rosen for writing an unusually balanced article on the volatile issue of gun control. His discussion of the role that the Second Amendment might play in assessing legislation is especially cogent. He is correct that it makes no more sense to read the amendment as an absolute prohibition of regulation than it does to read the equally categorical First Amendment as a complete bar on regulation of speech. The government may suppress even otherwise highly protected political speech if it can demonstrate a "compelling state interest" in doing so.

The practical question, then, is whether we want the courts to play a more active role in monitoring legislation involving access to guns. For lawyers, the issue is what level of judicial scrutiny should apply. Gerald Gunther of Stanford has argued that truly "strict" scrutiny by the courts is almost invariably "fatal" to the legislation under review, as against the minimalist post-New Deal standard that basically leaves legislatures to do as they wish. In this light, one may wonder whether Mr. Rosen's questioning of the efficacy of federal gun registration is merely a policy critique or an implicit constitutional one as well, since an ineffective law obviously serves no "compelling" state interest.

Moreover, whatever the Second Amendment's quite opaque language, almost no one believes that it, any more than the rest of the Bill of Rights, was initially intended to restrain the states; it was a limitation only on national power. The addition of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, with its either intended (as I believe) or judicially imposed (as many others would describe it) "incorporation" of the Bill of Rights as a limit on the states as well, makes it necessary to decide whether the Second Amendment is also a bar to at least some state regulation.

One of the ironies left unexamined in Mr. Rosen's article is that some conservatives who are often extremely critical of judicially mandated "incorporation" of certain provisions of the Bill of Rights are pleading with judges to do exactly the same thing with the as yet unincorporated Second Amendment. Similarly, many liberals who embrace very extensive incorporation have remained strangely silent with respect to the Second Amendment.

The one thing that can be said for certain is that too much past discussion of gun regulation and the Second Amendment has descended into unproductive polemic. One need not embrace every aspect of Mr. Rosen's article to recognize it as a welcome call for, and demonstration of, a civil search for a "third way" between Second Amendment absolutists and those who refuse to accept the possibility that there are any arguments, either political or constitutional, against gun control.

University of Texas School of Law
Austin, Texas

DANIEL D. POLSBY:

The sane tenor of Gary Rosen's article is a welcome antidote to the usual melodramatics that opinion leaders practice on the subject of gun policy. Like all rights, the right to keep and bear arms is subject to reasonable regulation, but what is reasonable depends on the criminological facts concerning the use and abuse of guns.

Facts do not support the argument for restricting ordinary citizens' access to firearms. Though it is well-established that most homicides are "acquaintance" homicides, the term is often used tendentiously to suggest that murderers are sprinkled around more or less randomly in the population. This is false. Every study of murder victims (and there have been many) agrees that in criminal profile, victims and perpetrators closely match. Eighty percent of murder victims in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and New Orleans either had prior criminal records or tested positive for narcotics at autopsy; 71 percent of victims of drive-by shootings in Los Angeles were found to be mem-

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bers of street gangs; two-thirds or more of murder victims in Chicago had adult police records. Drug dealers and gang-bangers who settle their differences with violence are often "acquainted" with one another. This is a far cry from the picture of shoot-'em-ups in typical families that anti-gun propagandists love to portray.

The argument that more guns lead to more murder largely rests on the correlation between rising firearms sales and rising murder rates from the late 1960's through the late 1970's. But what caused what? As a study by Lawrence Southwick demonstrated, this correspondence simply reflected people's natural desire for more self-protection at a time when law enforcement and all the norms that support it were visibly collapsing.

In any case, as Don Kates and I have documented in a recent article, the correlation between the number of guns in society and the incidence of murder completely disappears in a longer time frame. There is no correlation at all between the two figures from 1945 (the earliest year for which data are available) to 1965. Then for a decade gun-ownership and murder escalated together. But in the subsequent fifteen-year period (1980-1994), the national inventory of civilian-owned handguns increased by 64 percent (and other firearms by 40 percent) while the murder rate actually declined. And in the years since 1994 the murder rate has declined still further—in fact by a third or more—while the number of civilian-owned weapons has constantly increased.

School of Law
George Mason University
Arlington, Virginia

SAMUEL C. WHEELER III:

I was delighted to see "Yes and No to Gun Control" by Gary Rosen. It is rare that the mainstream media publish such nicely reasoned pieces, and most academics, to our shame, continue to buy into the ideology of disarming citizens as a means to end violence.

University of Connecticut
Storrs, Connecticut

Gary Rosen

ASKED RECENTLY about the political bent of *The West Wing*, NBC's hit television show about a newly elected President and his Oval Office staff, one of the program's executive producers insisted on its ideological evenhandedness. Yes, he told the *New York Times*, the fictional administration is unabashedly liberal and Democratic; but the show strives to "present a very balanced view of an issue, to present both sides." There was, he confessed, one exception to this rule: "The only issue we don't do that on is gun control."

So it goes in our national debate over firearms policy, one of the few questions on which the major media, from prime-time television to the leading newspapers, routinely ignore the very existence of respectable opinions that differ from liberal conventional wisdom. Unfortunately, as I tried to show in my article, much of that conventional wisdom is quite wrongheaded, while the dissenting view on gun control—even if mistaken on a number of particulars and too often stated in distressingly extreme terms—has much to recommend it.

A NOTEWORTHY feature of the letters from Michael Beard of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence and Eric Gorovitz of the Million Mom March Foundation is the complete absence of any mention of the Second Amendment. Indeed, as far as the organized gun-control movement is concerned, this part of the Bill of Rights is completely irrelevant to the present-day policy debate, and imposes no limits of any kind on the sort of legal restrictions that may be placed on firearms and their owners.

The usual rationale for this dismissive attitude is neatly summarized by Daniel C. Smolens, who suggests that "the words of the Second Amendment . . . tie the right [to firearms] to an individual's obligation to serve as a member of a common defense force"; now that our national security "has been entrusted to a professional army," this right has been completely deprived of meaning. The language to which Mr. Smolens refers, of course, is the following: "A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

In rejecting this view of a somewhat obscure corner of the Bill of Rights—and in asserting the existence of a fundamental and abiding individual right to firearms—I was relying upon an impressive body of legal and historical scholarship that has developed over the past two decades. This scholarship has been the work not of paid agents of the NRA but of dozens of independent researchers and established academics, including such luminaries of the liberal legal establishment as Laurence Tribe, Akhil Reed Amar, and (among the letter-writers above) Sanford Levinson. I cannot do justice here to their conclusions, or the sources upon which they draw, but their arguments basically proceed along two tracks.

In the first place, and from a strictly textual point of view, the expression "right of the people" is used throughout the Bill of Rights to refer to the fundamental privileges of *individuals*, as in the First Amendment's "right of the people peaceably to assemble" and the Fourth's "right of the people to be secure . . . against unreasonable searches and seizures." Admittedly, the Second Amendment differs because of its peculiar preamble about the militia, but to condition "the right of the people to keep and bear

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arms" on the existence of such a body is to reverse the order of things: even if the primary purpose of the right is to make possible a "well-regulated militia," the right itself is plainly paramount. Imagine, by way of analogy, how the religion clauses of the First Amendment would be understood if they were preceded—as well they might have been, considering the deeply felt Protestantism of the early republic—by the words, "Vigorous, independent churches, being necessary to the moral well-being of a free state . . . ." Were this the case, I somehow doubt that the religious liberties of Catholics, Jews, and other non-Protestants would today be interpreted any less expansively.

As a historical matter, moreover, it is a mistake to view the militia in narrowly military terms, as nothing more than a tool of the state governments or as a (now superannuated) back-up for the regular federal army. Alarming though it may sound to modern sensibilities, the 18th-century militia was universally considered an essential popular check on government power—and a reflection, ultimately, of the people's sovereignty and indefeasible right of self-defense. As George Mason put it during the debate over the Constitution's ratification, the militia consists in principle "of the whole people." James Madison agreed, stressing in *The Federalist* that a key safeguard in the event of federal tyranny was "the advantage of being armed, which the Americans possess over the people of almost every other nation"—a view evident in his later sponsorship of the Bill of Rights.

NEVERTHELESS, AS Sanford Levinson observes (and as I argued in my article), the fact that the Second Amendment protects a fundamental individual right does not mean that it should be read "as an absolute prohibition of regulation." Here is where the gun enthusiasts among my correspondents take sharp issue with me. Larry Pratt of the Gun Owners of America—a group that prides itself on standing to the right of the NRA—rejects every sort of control, including background checks, as the equivalent of having to "request permission" to exercise a constitutional right. Stephen W. Borgess and John F. Brinson seem to believe that the Constitution entitles them to virtually limitless firepower. And David I. Caplan and James H. Fink, while conceding in the abstract that some degree of regulation is legitimate, suggest that most of today's gun-control laws are in fact unconstitutional.

I do not pretend to have a definitive answer to the technical legal question of precisely what *kind* of "scrutiny" the judiciary should apply to Second Amendment cases. It does appear to me, though, that any number of public-safety-minded restrictions on how guns are acquired—and even, up to a point, on what kinds of guns are allowed to be sold—are perfectly compatible with the full exercise of Second Amendment rights, just as reasonable limits respecting time, place, and manner are not thought to interfere with constitutionally protected speech. Indeed, there is something perversely incongruous about gun-owners complaining of an ongoing assault on their liberties at a time when Americans possess some 230 million firearms and are easily the most heavily armed people on earth.

What, then, should be the practical effect of the right "to keep and bear arms"? If taken seriously by the courts—something that has yet to happen—the Second Amendment would, I think, prevent banning the most commonly used handguns and long guns, whether through outright prohibition or draconian regulatory schemes. And, yes, to answer Mr. Levinson's query, I would expect such a right to have force against the states as well as the federal government, since the "incorporation" cat, however dubious its pedigree, is now very much out of the bag.

No less important perhaps, especially for moderating this most heated of policy debates, would be some recognition of the Second Amendment by the gun-control movement itself. Paranoid though the gun lobby may be at times about the ultimate intentions of the "gun-grabbers," the fact remains that all the major gun-control groups either endorse far-reaching bans on firearms or refuse to rule them out as a future goal.

SO MUCH for the law. As for the policy side of the debate, those pressing for further regulation would be more credible in claiming to speak for "common sense" if they were not so determined to paint gun-ownership itself as a grave danger and to deny the valid, even life-saving, uses to which Americans put their guns. Because Michael Beard cannot abide the possibility that self-defense with a gun is commonplace in the U.S., he asserts that the most authoritative survey on the subject, conducted by the criminologist Gary Kleck, has been "demolished by impartial researchers." This is nonsense. Kleck's work is widely accepted in the academic community, even by many supporters of gun control, and his basic conclusion about the frequency of defensive gun use, if not his exact finding of 2.5 million cases a year, has been confirmed by more than fifteen other independent studies. The lone exception to this scholarly consensus is the methodologically suspect National Crime Victimization Survey, to which Mr. Beard so disingenuously repairs.

Similarly, Eric Gorovitz would have us believe that lethal violence in the U.S. is best explained by the large number of guns held by ordinary Americans, but he is predictably short on evidence. Though more than half the gun deaths in the country are indeed suicides, as he maintains, the overall suicide rate has hardly changed since the early 1970's, despite a *doubling* of

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the nation's gun stock during this period. As for the fact that gun crimes occur overwhelmingly between "people who know each other"—people who but for owning guns, Mr. Gorovitz suggests, are just regular folks—I would refer readers to Daniel D. Polsby's letter, which nicely exposes the criminological reality behind this deceptive argument.

Mr. Gorovitz offers some international comparisons as well, but to what end I am unsure. My point about Switzerland (whose rules on ammunition, incidentally, he grossly misrepresents), Israel, and Norway was not that they have no gun laws, but that they have a great many privately owned guns and very little violent crime. In short, the widespread availability of guns, as I argued in my article and as Mr. Polsby further shows in discussing postwar murder rates, does not by itself generate violence.

Finally, there is the issue of safety. Though in my article I criticized the idea of mandating "smart-gun" technology, I did not suggest, as Mr. Gorovitz reports, that any effort to regulate firearm design is "misguided," nor do I have any objections to requiring gun-owners, especially holders of concealed-weapon permits, to receive some training, which is David J. Steinberg's chief concern. If prudently implemented, such measures would probably help to save a few lives each year. But accidental gun death is already relatively uncommon in the U.S., and its incidence has been steadily declining; moreover, it does not happen at random but is concentrated among the same risk-prone populations that are also most likely to commit gun *crimes*. That the gun-control movement refuses to acknowledge these facts while decrying the danger that firearms pose to children and other innocents is yet another aspect of its campaign to draw into question the competence and responsibility of ordinary gun-owners.

IF GUN-CONTROLLERS are guilty of a reflexive hostility to firearms and their owners, the corresponding vice on the other side is to rush headlong to the bottom of the slippery slope at the very mention of regulation. Thus, for Larry Pratt, background checks are not just a "dangerous concept" and an "intrusion," they are an "easy way" for the federal government to achieve gun registration, which in turn brings us "a giant leap closer to a complete ban on the private ownership of firearms." James Fink provides a novel variation on this scenario by insisting that if gun registration becomes law, "defending oneself from attack with an unregistered firearm will trump any other crime."

By contrast, what distinguishes the work of John R. Lott, Jr., whose important book, *More Guns, Less Crime*, I cited in discussing concealed-weapon laws, is his determination to bring rigorous empirical research to bear on the gun policies that he considers so counterproductive. I am therefore flattered that Mr. Lott found my article "very thoughtful," though I am afraid that he has missed or mischaracterized my point on a number of issues.

I never suggested that placing restrictions on plastic guns was a "crucial law" with respect to public safety; in fact, I described the measure's significance as "symbolic." Though Mr. Lott is correct that the original controversy over the partially plastic Glock pistol was something of a sham, it eventually developed into a wider debate about the various (not implausible) ways in which weapons might be rendered undetectable. By resisting any effort to anticipate such dangers, slight though they might be—and by doing so in the immediate wake of the 1986 McClure-Volkmer Act, a historic rollback of many federal gun-control provisions—the supporters of gun rights did display, as I wrote, "an astonishing and self-destructive obtuseness." The same has been true, I would add, of their opposition to the very idea of regulating "assault" weapons, whose combination of high-capacity ammunition clips and various military-style features separates them, contra Mr. Lott, from other semiautomatic rifles.

I will not dwell on Mr. Lott's criticisms of gun licensing and registration, since in my article I opposed the former as a waste of time and money and gave only qualified support to the latter as a way "to discourage illicit sales." His criticisms are more properly directed to Michael Beard, who typifies the gun-control movement's unthinking support for licensing and registration despite the availability of less cumbersome alternatives.

Foremost among these alternatives, as I argued in my article, would be a more comprehensive regime of instant background checks for *all* gun purchases. On this question, I believe, John Lott's single-minded reliance on the available research does him a disservice. Echoing Mr. Pratt—but declining to join his explicit call for repealing the Brady Act—Mr. Lott observes that "there is not one single academic study concluding that background checks reduce violent crime."

Though I would not go this far in characterizing the literature on the subject, it is certainly true that the elaborate statistical models constructed by social scientists have failed to demonstrate that laws requiring background checks have helped to stop homicide, assault, and robbery. I would suggest, however, that this is very nearly irrelevant. The fact remains that the Brady Act has prevented more than 500,000 felons and other malefactors from receiving the weapons they wanted at the moment they wanted them. No amount of social-scientific research will convince the public that this is a bad thing, and the public's instinct is right.

My thanks, finally, to Samuel C. Wheeler III for his generous praise.

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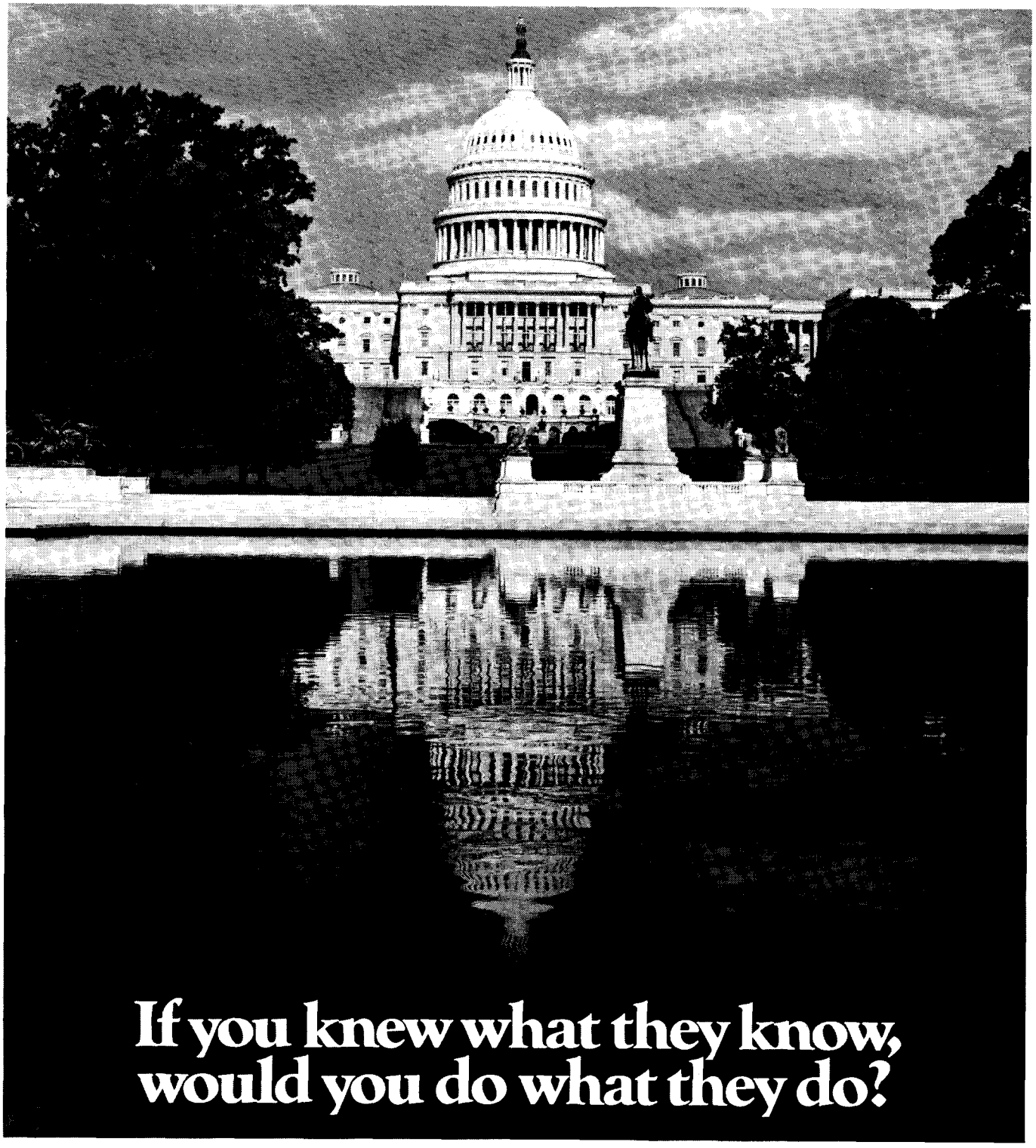

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Commentary
December 2000

Intifada II: Death of an Illusion?

Norman Podhoretz

"In my beginning is my end," wrote T.S. Eliot in words that are well suited to the Arab war against Israel. Although there is no end in sight to that war, the violence to which the Palestinians resorted in the wake of Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount on September 28 does at least mark the end of one act in this long and bloody drama. This was the act that began with the agreement at Oslo, which was then ratified on the White House lawn in September 1993 by Yasir Arafat, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and Yitzhak Rabin, then the prime minister of Israel, with perhaps the most famous handshake in history.

So much diplomatic and political smoke has been blown in our eyes since that moment that a clear-sighted look at the act that opened then and is just now concluding requires us to step back and recapitulate. For even though we do indeed have here a near-perfect case of a beginning that was inexorably destined for the bitter end it has now reached, mighty efforts were made on all sides to persuade us that it would be otherwise.

In the early 18th century, the English theologian Bishop Joseph Butler said: "Things and actions are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be: why then should we desire to be deceived?" About 200 years later, T.S. Eliot, to cite him again, gave us the answer to this breathtaking question when he observed in an entirely different context that ". . . human kind/Cannot bear very much reality."

In this instance, the unbearable reality being evaded was that Israel's yearning for peace was shared neither by the Arab world in general nor by the Palestinians in particular—that their objection was not to anything Israel had done or failed to do, but to the very fact that it existed at all. Then, as time went on, and episode after episode occurred exposing the delusion of Oslo for what it was, more and more rationalizations had to be invented, and more and more lies had to be told, to keep it alive. Too much hope—and too much political capital—had been invested in the "peace process" to allow any opening of eyes that had been blinded and minds that had been closed by the dazzling mirage on the White House lawn.

No doubt believers in the idea that the road to peace had at last been found often directed these efforts to conceal the truth mainly at themselves. But they were hardly the sole or the exclusive objects of their own deceptions. On the contrary. The enthusiasm for Oslo—manifested, among many other ways, in the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Yitzhak Rabin, his foreign minister Shimon Peres, and Yasir Arafat for having brought it

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about—was worldwide. So universal was it and so fervent that, with the ruthless unconcern of a tidal wave, it swept aside all doubts about the wisdom or the viability of the agreement.

Not, to be sure, in the Israeli public as a whole, where such doubts did continue to be harbored and, as we shall see, expressed from time to time in the electorate's choice of political leadership; but certainly in the major centers of opinion both in Israel and abroad, and wherever the writ of contemporary liberalism extended. In that vast domain, any Jew or for that matter any non-Jew (and there was a small brave band of them, an unhappy few) who voiced skepticism about Oslo immediately got stigmatized as an enemy of peace. This made him the moral equivalent, if not the de-facto ally, of Arab opponents of Oslo like the Muslim terrorists of Hamas and Hezbollah. Having been thus morally delegitimized, critics of the now-sacrosanct process were derided as well for their intellectual sins, accused of being too rigid to perceive that new developments had totally transformed the conflict between Israel and the Arab world.

THERE WERE two distinct though complementary interpretations of these developments. One was the "realistic" analysis espoused by Rabin, the other a "visionary" picture painted by Peres.

As Rabin saw it, the demise of the Soviet Union had completely altered the old "strategic equation" in the Middle East by depriving the "frontline" Arab states of the armorer they had previously depended upon for engaging Israel militarily. In consequence, there was almost no likelihood that they would start any more conventional wars, as they had done several times in the past. This meant in effect that the Palestinians were now on their own; and while they could, on their own, assuredly make life miserable for Israel through terrorism, they were too weak to pose an "existential threat" to the Jewish state. The only serious such threat now came from the missiles of Iran and/or Iraq. To protect itself from that threat, Israel needed the help of the United States in building an effective system of antiballistic-missile defense.

In Rabin's view, then, the overriding strategic objective—merging military with political imperatives—was to ensure continued American support. How to do this? Well, the Americans were convinced (while not admitting it openly lest it arouse domestic political opposition) that giving the Palestinians a state of their own was the answer to unrest and instability throughout the Middle East. It followed that if Israel were to drop its "intransigent" resistance to this solution, relations with Washington would be more or less permanently shored up. This would in one stroke eliminate any future possibility that Israel might be denied the advanced military technology on which its survival now rested and that it could only get from the Pentagon.

My own guess is that Rabin in his heart of hearts was also motivated by the realization that Israel did not know how to deal effectively with the *intifada*, the new form of warfare that the Palestinians had now been waging for some six years. When the *intifada* first erupted, Rabin (then the defense minister under Yitzhak Shamir) had declared that he would "break the bones" of the Palestinians rioters. But breaking their bones did not avail, especially as the Palestinians—adopting a tactic that was at once brilliant and evil—were sending their *children* to throw stones at armed Israeli soldiers, most of all when TV cameras were present. In defending themselves and fighting back, even if only with rubber bullets, the Israelis inflicted casualties on these children, which inevitably tarnished their longstanding pride in their "purity of arms." In the end it was Rabin himself and a large segment of the Israeli people who were broken by the *intifada*: broken in spirit, broken in morale.

Prudently, Rabin never acknowledged anything like this in public. Nor did he ever make a speech explaining his overall strategy with respect to the United States. But it was no secret, having been spelled out in private to various friendly interlocutors. And others (in the course of trying to understand why Rabin was now crossing one "red line" after another that he had vowed never to cross) soon enough figured out what he had in mind. Of course, to understand the strategy did not necessarily entail agreeing with it. But disagreement, however carefully reasoned, had zero effect on Rabin and his battalions of cheerleaders.

Thus, it did no good whatsoever for critics of this analysis to observe that the United States was running into troubles of its own in constructing a defense against ballistic missiles. Admittedly, these troubles were more political than technological. Nevertheless, there was uncertainty as to whether the special aid from Washington on which Rabin was counting would ultimately be available.

Nor did it do the critics any good to pile up evidence that the State Department was flat-out wrong in its conviction that the Middle East would become more stable if a Palestinian state were to be established. As against the regnant cliché that the Palestinians were the "heart" of the region's problems, some of us pointed out that since Israel's

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birth in 1948 many wars had been fought among Arabs and/or Muslims over issues that had nothing to do with either the Jewish state or the Palestinians. Not only that, but the corpses produced by just one of these wars alone (Iran vs. Iraq) far exceeded the total number of casualties resulting from all those between the Arabs and Israel. Like every other argument we brought forth, this one too fell on deaf ears. Yet all by itself, it should have been enough to refute the dogma that "the key" to Middle Eastern stability was a Palestinian state under the despotic leadership of the PLO.

Moreover, there were many other grounds for expecting that a PLO state would breed more unrest and more instability than the present situation. To choose only the most obvious one, the fact that the majority of the population of Jordan was Palestinian could easily lead to a move by Arafat or his successors to take over that country, thereby creating the risk of an intervention by Syria (which had never ceased regarding not only Israel but also Lebanon and Jordan as "Southern Syria").

And none of this was even to mention the persistent refusal of the Palestinians themselves to surrender their claim on the entire territory lying within Israel's pre-1967 borders. (To this day, incredibly, despite at least three exultant announcements by Peres and Arafat that the articles of the Palestine National Covenant committing the PLO to the destruction of Israel had now definitely been repealed as mandated by Oslo, it remains unclear whether they actually ever were.) Nor did it touch upon the terrible problem that would arise with the million Palestinian citizens of Israel, some 800,000 of whom lived in the Galilee, where they constituted a majority. To which state would they remain loyal? Might they turn out to be a contemporary analogue of the German citizens of Czechoslovakia between the two world wars who became the pretext for Nazi Germany's phased conquest of that whole country?

If there were deadly serious questions arising from the "realistic" analysis through which Rabin justified his embrace of Oslo, they were as nothing compared with the plain foolishness of Peres's vision of a "new Middle East." And if Rabin set foot on the path marked out by Oslo with misgivings and visible reluctance, Peres was so breathlessly eager that he fell all over himself in running toward it.

In the 1960's, a major slogan of the counterculture was "Make Love, Not War." Peres's vision of the new Middle East could be summarized in a variant of this catchy battlecry (and a battlecry, ironically, was what this pacifist slogan amounted to): "Make Money, Not War." Reading or listening to Peres, one might have imagined that a kind of vulgar Marxist end of days had arrived in which the lion would not merely lie down with the lamb but go into business with it—both parties having discovered how much more pleasant it is to get rich than to fight, perchance to die.

To all appearances, the new faith Peres had adopted was not disturbed by the fact that, in the three or four years after Oslo, where the Arabs specifically pledged to renounce terrorism, about twice as many Israeli lives were lost to Palestinian suicide bombers than in the three or four years *before* the Arabs had presumably opted for money over war. Brushing off the grisly evidence of mangled corpses in the buses and marketplaces of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem—he and his supporters even took to characterizing the Jewish victims of these attacks as "martyrs to peace"—Peres went complacently on his visionary way. Though he never to my knowledge quoted Tertullian, the early father of the Church who declared of Christianity that he believed in it precisely because it was unbelievable, some such slogan could easily have become for Peres the spiritual complement, so to speak, of the materialistic "Make Money, Not War."

The complete fatuity of this notion was on vivid display at a 1994 conference in Morocco called by the Council on Foreign Relations (though I suspect the idea originally came from Peres). The purpose of the conference was to bring the nations of the Middle East together to formulate plans for cooperative economic development throughout the region. Here, if anywhere, was a chance for the Arab Middle East to signal that it had indeed arrived at a stage where it was more interested in making money by cooperating with Israel than in making war against it. Yet the delegation from Egypt—the first country to sign a peace treaty with Israel—showed up with a 90-page booklet containing a host of proposals in which the name of Israel was never once mentioned and illustrated by six maps of the Middle East on which the state of Israel did not appear. Meanwhile, in the military exercises of the Egyptian armed forces, Israel would continue to be cast as the presumptive enemy. So much for making money, not war.

Another component of Peres's vision of the "new Middle East," which dovetailed with Rabin's supposedly more hard-headed conception, was that the age of missiles had rendered territorial buffer zones obsolete. This assessment was intended to undermine the old conviction (once shared by all Israelis, emphatically including the younger Peres

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himself) that retreating to the boundaries in which Israel had lived before the Six-Day war of 1967, especially if a Palestinian state were left behind, was incompatible with the nation's security. But now, according to Peres, when land wars were becoming a thing of the past, so too was the notion of secure borders.

On this issue as well, abundant evidence to the contrary—most notably the Gulf war, which in the end had to be won (to the extent that it *was* won) by ground troops and tanks—was cavalierly ignored. Or else, like Palestinian terrorism, it was dismissed as just another hangover from a past that would soon be disposed of by History in its own species of mopping-up operation.

Yet while Peres himself may have kept the faith, stubbornly continuing to insist that he would not give terrorists a "victory" by abandoning the "peace process," the Israeli voting public disagreed. Running for prime minister in 1996 after the assassination of Rabin, Peres was beaten by Benjamin Netanyahu, who had been a strong critic of Oslo and would presumably adopt a tougher policy toward the Palestinians.

IN THE event, Netanyahu disappointed many of his supporters by deciding to honor the Oslo agreement even though repeated Palestinian violations provided him with a legally sound case for backing out of it. True, while running for election, he had all but openly suggested that he *would* stick with Oslo. Yet if Rabin, in running for election some years earlier, had sworn never to negotiate with the PLO and then proceeded to do the opposite, why should Netanyahu have been expected to hold to his own campaign rhetoric?

But there was something even more disappointing to the hawks who had looked to Netanyahu for salvation from a "peace process" that they regarded as suicidal. This was the hesitant and inconsistent manner in which he enforced what he had most definitely promised: namely, to take no further steps along the Oslo road unless the Palestinians "reciprocated" by fully honoring their part of the bargain.

To the dismay of many who had assumed that *this* promise would at least be kept, Israeli territorial withdrawals went on under Netanyahu even though Arafat and his minions continued calling among themselves (but never when they spoke in Western languages to Western ears) for *jihad*, or "holy war," against Israel; even though Oslo was characterized (but, again, only in Arabic) as merely a stage in a multiphased struggle to wipe Israel off the map; and even though Palestinian schoolchildren were still being taught that Israel was an abomination that had to be eradicated. (Israeli schoolchildren, by contrast, were daily being offered history lessons that bent over backward to present the justice of the Palestinian claims.)

Palestinian violations of Oslo were by no means confined to the spoken word, or even to terrorism. For Arafat's Palestinian Authority (PA) was also stealthily building an army. Oslo had authorized a 24,000-man Palestinian police force armed only enough to maintain law and order within the territory Israel was ceding to the PA. Bizarre as it seems, the arms had been supplied by Rabin and Peres on the assumption that the PA police would relieve Israeli soldiers of the unpleasant necessity of policing these areas themselves. With a cynicism understandably bred by the double standard always being applied to Israel in these matters, Rabin once even remarked that whereas the Israelis were constantly being berated by human-rights organizations for trying to keep order, the Palestinians could be as brutal as they liked without running into much trouble from those same organizations. About this, he turned out to be largely right.

But so far as we can tell from the record, what Rabin never foresaw was that the Palestinians would not rest content with only 24,000 policemen, nor with the rifles they happily took from Israel. As the years passed, the number of "policemen" would rise to at least 40,000, and the heavier weapons precluded by Oslo would be smuggled in from Jordan and elsewhere. What Rabin also failed to anticipate—and did not live to see—was that the guns he had agreed to give the Palestinians would wind up being turned against Israelis, and that the police who were supposed to control rioters would instead join in with and even lead them.

THE FIRST time this happened was a kind of rehearsal for the violence we have just been living through. It occurred in September 1996, about three months after Netanyahu became prime minister, when a new exit was opened to an archeological tunnel in Jerusalem. Though work on this tunnel had been going on for years without objection from anyone, the new exit set off a Palestinian protest in Ramallah that soon spread through the West Bank and Gaza; and as it spread, it escalated. By the time Arafat had called a halt to the throwing of rocks and Molotov cocktails and the firing by Palestinian police on Israeli civilians and soldiers, who then fired back, 73 people were dead and some 1,500 injured.

Most of these were Palestinians, since in a fire-

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fight Israel still had a great advantage. To Arafat, however, this discrepancy in the number of casualties was more a source of pride than of regret. Had he not told the Palestinian police themselves only a week earlier that "our blood is cheap for Jerusalem"?

Besides, the whole incident could be and was exploited by Palestinian propaganda. According to the PA, the tunnel was intended by the Israelis to undermine the foundations of the al-Aqsa mosque on the Temple Mount, one of Islam's holiest places, and it was this nefarious enterprise that triggered the wholly justified rage of the Palestinians. Almost everyone in the world took the PA version of events at face value, and yet the most cursory glance at the situation would have shown that the allegation was blatantly false. As even the anti-Netanyahu editor of the *Biblical Archaeology Review* was constrained to acknowledge: "The tunnel is *outside* the Temple Mount. It threatens no religious sites. The al-Aqsa mosque is at the other end of the Temple Mount, as far away as you can get."

There were five lessons that should have hit home as a result of the tunnel episode. One was that the Palestinians felt no need to fulfill their main obligation under Oslo, which was to substitute negotiations for violence. This they more or less would do—if, that is, and only if, the negotiations were going their way. But if the Israelis did anything that displeased them, they would not hesitate to resort once again to force, even (or, with the media in mind, especially) if they themselves, and their children, were bound to suffer the heaviest casualties.

Was this enough to demonstrate that the critics of Oslo had been right all along in their belief that Israel did not have "a partner for peace" in Arafat? Not on your life. Rather than recognizing Arafat for what he was, and was not, much of the world decided that it was the Palestinians who did not have "a partner for peace" in Netanyahu. Having been denounced by his formerly most passionate supporters for refusing to abrogate Oslo, he now found himself vilified for sabotaging it. This charge was hurled at him by Jewish enthusiasts of Oslo within both Israel and America, as well as by the foreign ministries of virtually every country on earth, including the one in Washington, over which Bill Clinton, the allegedly "best friend" Israel had ever had, presided.

Yet all Netanyahu had done was to slow down the process a bit, and by means so trivial that after only a few years or even weeks no one could remember what they were. Even at the time, his political opponents and enemies had to go to almost comical lengths in drawing up an indictment against him. For example, in the words of one bill of particulars, his unforgivably major sins against the "peace process" consisted of (1) taking his time after being elected before deciding "to see Yasir Arafat"; (2) "making [Arafat] wait to travel in his helicopter within the West Bank"; and (3) "finally shaking hands with [Arafat] with a near grimace."

To this ridiculous list was added a number of more serious actions, but no hint was breathed that these same actions had also been taken by Peres when, in his brief tenure as prime minister after the assassination of Rabin, even he could not go on merely reaffirming his love of peace whenever another terrorist bomb exploded in Israel. (The main such actions by Peres were extending the deadline for a withdrawal from Hebron and sealing off the borders between Israel and the occupied territories.) Nor was there any mention of the things Netanyahu—eliciting even more furious disappointment among his old supporters—had done to mitigate or even reverse some of these policies he had inherited from Peres, like easing restrictions on the number of Arab workers allowed into Israel from the territories every day, and going through with the pullout from Hebron.

A second lesson of the tunnel episode, then, was that the term "peace process" was itself a fraud. It did not mean what the words normally signified: negotiations aiming at a yet-to-be-hammered-out agreement between parties previously at war. Rather, it was a deceptive euphemism for steady Israeli movement toward a predetermined end, which was the turnover of the West Bank and Gaza to a new Palestinian state. Any slowing of the pace for any reason was condemned as "foot-dragging," and even the slightest indication from the Israeli side that the Palestinians would not get everything they wanted was interpreted as contrary to the spirit of the peace process and a provocation that justified them in once again picking up the gun.

Which brings us to the third lesson yielded by the tunnel episode. Among the great achievements to which enthusiasts of Oslo and its aftermath proudly pointed was that Israel was becoming increasingly less isolated. Before Oslo, cooed the doves, Israel's only friend of any consequence had been the United States; and within the Arab world, only Egypt had been willing to make peace with the Jewish state, and only a "cold peace" at that. Now, however, Israel was ceasing to be a pariah. Even at the United Nations, which had for so long been viciously hostile, the atmosphere had grown warmer;

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and, more telling still, commercial and other relations were being established with some of the more moderate Arab states.

All true; but what the tunnel episode revealed was that every bit of this good will would vanish the instant Israel made a single false move—that is, a move that the Palestinians declared to be false. At the UN, a Security Council resolution condemning Israel over the tunnel incident passed by a vote of 14-0, with the United States under Bill Clinton—in a preview of what he would do in October of this year—abstaining when it might have exercised its veto.

As for the Arab world, even the states that had traditionally been least hostile to Israel now ganged up on it. The dovish *Jerusalem Report* summed up the situation:

> King Hassan of Morocco . . . ordered a complete freeze on his government's relations with Israel. . . . The president of Tunis . . . followed suit and ordered formal contacts between his country and the Netanyahu government severed. Oil-rich Qatar . . . postponed the opening of [its] trade office in Israel and called off direct meetings with Israeli officials.

This report was supposed to prove that Netanyahu had done great damage to Israel. But what it inadvertently exposed was that any warming trend among the Arabs would turn to solid ice the moment they suspected that Israel might be stalling in its journey toward the only acceptable conclusion of the "peace process": complete withdrawal (with minor modifications) to the borders of 1967 and the recognition of a Palestinian state in the territories Israel had conquered in the Six-Day war of that year.

Even this, however, would not suffice—and here we arrive at the fourth lesson of the tunnel episode. In a moment of candor, Arafat himself admitted that he had started the miniwar over the tunnel to fight against "the Judaization of Jerusalem." The only acceptable "peace package," in other words, had to be stuffed with the gift of East Jerusalem as the capital of the new Palestinian state. No Jerusalem, no deal.

To this a codicil was added, and it represents the fifth and final lesson to emerge from the tunnel episode. If Israel would not deliver the right "peace package," the alternative was another war—a war not between Israel and the Palestinians alone but between Israel and the whole Arab world. Even Egypt, which had signed a peace treaty with Israel years earlier, and Jordan, which had just done the same, would participate in this war.

That a major war was in the minds of the Arab leaders became—or should have become—obvious during one of those hastily arranged meetings that Bill Clinton loves to call whenever another crisis erupts between Israel and the Palestinians. (Arafat, astoundingly, holds the record for the number of visits with Clinton by foreign leaders.) At the meeting to resolve the tunnel crisis, the late King Hussein of Jordan, that famous moderate, excoriated Netanyahu for having dragged the region to "the edge of the abyss." In spelling out his meaning a few days later, he had the impudence to bring up the Iraqi missile attacks on Israel during the Gulf war, when he himself had sided with Saddam Hussein to the point of providing targeting guidance to Iraqi controllers as their missiles—with the blessing of the "little king"—flew over Jordanian air space.

Having been forgiven, as he always was no matter what he did, thus spake King Hussein: "In the current situation, if we do not stride strongly forward to achieve peace, everything imaginable can happen, including a revival of 1991 when Netanyahu wore his gas mask on television. The alternative to peace is more awful than we can imagine."

And what of that other famous moderate, the Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak? Since he had recently described Israel as "a knife plunged into the nations of this region"—note the words "nations of this region" rather than "Palestinians"—it is not surprising that Mubarak should have refused to attend the White House meeting at all. Coupled with this refusal was a warning that the Palestinians would soon take up arms again, and through his former military chief of staff Mubarak also warned that Egypt and the other Arab states would be ready to rush into the battle with every expectation of victory: "The combined weaponry of the Arab states today exceeds that of Israel. If all these weapons were directed against Israel, the Arab states could defeat Israel."

Then we come to Hafez al-Assad, the late president of Syria. No one ever confused him with a moderate, but in spite of the "strategic decision for peace" he had supposedly made, Assad decided a few weeks after the White House summit that Israel was—in the words of one of his spokesmen—"preparing the region for a new war," and that the Arabs now had "to consider options other than the peace process." Note again that the war for which preparations had to be made was not between Israel and the Palestinians alone, but between Israel and the *Arabs*.

WHEN EHUD Barak of the Labor party, defeating the by-now much-battered Netanyahu, became prime minister of Israel in 1999, he was widely hailed as a disciple of Rabin who would

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put his martyred predecessor's policies back on track. And so he did—with a veritable vengeance. No one could accuse *him* of "dragging his feet" or of insisting on "reciprocity," and the only defect he could find in the Oslo "peace process" was that it was being implemented too slowly. In this he seemed to resemble Peres more than Rabin, raring to go, chafing at the bit, hardly able to wait before satisfying all Palestinian demands as quickly as possible—and to make a deal with Syria while he was at it. To judge both from Barak's statements and his behavior, the tunnel war might never have happened, so apparently oblivious was he of the lessons it had taught about the realities of Israel's situation and the intentions of the Arab world.

Accordingly, Barak cut immediately to the chase. Among the first things he did was to pledge an early withdrawal of Israeli troops from the security zone in Lebanon that, with the aid of local militiamen, they had been policing since 1982 in order to protect northern Israel from terrorist and other attacks by the Hezbollah—a pledge that he subsequently carried out under fire and ahead of his one-year schedule. Barak also indicated that he was willing to return virtually the whole of the Golan Heights to Syria in exchange for a peace treaty. And he declared himself ready to skip the type of interim steps and phased agreements with the Palestinians that were the progeny of Oslo. What he preferred was to discuss the terms of a final settlement. Which meant that precisely the *most* difficult problems—the status of Jerusalem, and what should be done about the Palestinians who had fled in 1948 and so many of whose descendants were still living in squalid refugee camps throughout the region—would be tackled now, and not (as formerly contemplated) be deferred to some later date when greater trust would presumably have developed between the parties.

So far did Barak's proposals go that in time they would even arouse the ire of Rabin's widow Leah, who had previously anointed the new prime minister as her late husband's legitimate heir. But what had once been unthinkable, and unsayable even by Rabin and Peres, was by now so taken for granted that it practically went without saying at all: a sovereign Palestinian state would soon be established. The only remaining question was whether this would be delayed until its exact boundaries, the location of its capital, and a few other matters had been determined by negotiations with Israel, or whether Arafat would make good on his repeated threat to bring it into being unilaterally.

While letting slip one deadline after another for acting on this threat, Arafat found himself on the receiving end of offers that went beyond anything ever contemplated by any previous Israeli government. Although one would never have known this from the tenor of most reporting in the media, and certainly not from Palestinian propaganda about the onerous Israeli "occupation," 98 percent of the Palestinians in the territories were already living under the rule of the PA. With the Israeli army having withdrawn from most of those territories before he assumed office, Barak now proposed to turn over virtually all the rest to the new Palestinian state (with Israel left holding, on grounds of military security, only a small and largely unpopulated area). Barak even offered to leave the Jordan Valley, which had once been regarded by all sides in Israel as essential to the country's security.

Nor was this all. Barak—again conceding what had recently been unthinkable—would accept certain districts in East Jerusalem as the capital of the new state of Palestine, while turning over the holy places to international supervision. Finally, and in some ways most radically of all, he was willing to grant the "right of return" to some 100,000 Palestinian refugees and compensate the remainder with money that Clinton (a little too confidently) assured him would be forthcoming from America.

All this might have been too much even for Rabin's widow, but it was not enough for Yasir Arafat. He demanded a larger share of Jerusalem and complete control over the Temple Mount, the site of the al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock (the latter repeatedly and mistakenly described in the media as a mosque). Under no circumstances would he entertain Barak's suggestion that a small sector of the Temple Mount be reserved for a synagogue. The Temple Mount belonged to Allah, and what Barak wanted was nothing less than a desecration and a blasphemy.

And so the stage was set for a replay of the tunnel war, one that would be bigger and more portentous than its predecessor. But before we can grasp what really happened, we must again clear the smoke away from several points that have—in the usual fashion of reporting on clashes between Israel and the Palestinians—been obscured either through ignorance or deliberate misrepresentation.

FOR A start, take the issue of the Temple Mount itself. Because there is a place called Mount Zion in Jerusalem, many people are under the impression that *it* is the site from which—as Jews (quoting the prophet Isaiah) proclaim whenever they remove the Torah scroll from the ark of a syna-

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gogue—the law and the word of God will go forth unto the nations. But the Zion of this prophecy-turned-prayer is not Mount Zion. It is the Temple Mount, so named precisely because King Solomon built his Temple there in the 10th century B.C.E.; and when, about a century after the destruction of that Temple by Babylonian invaders in 586 B.C.E., a second one was built, it too was located on the same site until being destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E.* And as if this were not enough, Jewish tradition also identifies the Temple Mount as the Mount Moriah of the Bible where God tested Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice his son Isaac and then stayed his hand.

In other words, the Temple Mount is the holiest of Jewish holy places, and has been so for at least 3,000 years—which means that the Jewish claim on it goes back over 1,500 years before there even was an Islam. Furthermore, whereas Jerusalem has been the center of Judaism since King David made his capital there in the 10th century B.C.E., the city is, by the Muslims' own reckoning, only the third holiest place in their religion. When Muslims pray, they do not face Jerusalem, as Jews do; they face Mecca.

In short, there is nothing in the least outrageous about the idea that the Temple Mount belongs to the Jews, though it was not even accessible to them during the years before 1967 when the Jordanians occupied Jerusalem. But in his notorious visit on September 28, Sharon was not even demanding that Israel physically take over the Temple Mount (which under Israeli sovereignty had long been administered by the Muslim authorities); all he was doing, as leader of the Likud opposition, was putting Barak *and* Arafat on notice that he would work against any agreement curtailing the right of any Jew to visit the Temple Mount whenever he wished.

It is Arafat who has made it necessary to emphasize what ought to be a self-evident point. For just as much of the Arab world has joined the chorus of Holocaust deniers in the West, so with comparable gall does Arafat go around declaring that "Jerusalem is not a Jewish city, despite the biblical myth planted in some minds"; that the two Temples never stood on the Temple Mount; and that the Western Wall is not a Jewish but "a Muslim shrine."

Some think that in going to the Temple Mount, Sharon was also trying to upstage his main rival for leadership of Likud, the politically resurgent Netanyahu. But even if that is true, what difference would it make to the assignment of blame for the outbreak of violence by the Palestinians in response to a peaceful walk around the site—a walk, we have since learned, that a day earlier had been duly cleared with the head of PA security? In retrospect, considering how unlikely it is that the head of PA security was ignorant of the plan for an outbreak, and in the light of reports that he himself had a hand in fomenting the riots, one wonders whether he was setting Sharon up by assuring him that there would be no problem if he were to visit the Temple Mount.

BE THAT as it may, we have also since learned that preparations for violence were already being made immediately before and during the summit between Arafat and Barak that Clinton had convened in July at Camp David. If, said a high-ranking PA security official quoted in an Israeli Arab magazine, the summit were to fail from the Palestinian point of view, a new *intifada* would follow:

> The Palestinian people are in a state of emergency against the failure of the Camp David summit. If the situation explodes they are ready for the next bloody battle against the Israeli occupation. The next *intifada* will be . . . more violent than the first one especially since the Palestinian people [now] possess weapons allowing them to defend themselves in a confrontation with the Israeli army.†

Regarding those weapons, this PA official then went on a week later (that is, *two full months* before Sharon would set foot on the Temple Mount) to inform the same magazine that

> Popular recruitment in the PA territories has increased greatly and the popular Palestinian army has been established. . . . Weapons have already been distributed to citizens by the PA, which supervises training and preparation for a potential confrontation with occupation forces.

Finally, the commander of the PA police stated that "the Palestinian police will be leading, together with all other noble sons of the Palestinian people, when the hour of confrontation arrives."

* The Western Wall is a section of the retaining wall of the Second Temple. Though never part of the Temple Mount as such, it has nevertheless been sanctified by proximity as well as by the protective function it once served.

† For this and most of the other quotations that follow from Arabic-language sources, I am indebted to the invaluable work of the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI). Under the leadership of Yigal Carmon, a former adviser on counterterrorism to both Yitzhak Shamir and Yitzhak Rabin, MEMRI monitors the Palestinian media, as well as the press of other Arab nations, and issues daily translations into English of significant articles and interviews that are rarely, if ever, noticed in Western coverage of the Middle East. MEMRI's website is at www.memri.org.

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When the summit did in fact fail, and when Clinton was perceived as blaming Arafat for turning down Barak's terms, which seemed even to the President extraordinarily generous, rocks and Molotov cocktails were at the ready, and the militiamen (or Tanzim) of Fatah, Arafat's own faction within the PLO, were lying in wait for an order from him to go on a rampage. In seizing on Sharon's visit as the right moment for such a signal, Arafat must have calculated that even though, as the leader of the Likud party, Sharon held no office within the Labor government, as a right-winger he was likely to be held responsible for the violence, exactly in the way the right-wing Netanyahu had been for the miniwar over the tunnel. And so it came about.

Despite the assurances of the PA security chief, violent disturbances broke out just moments after Sharon left the area. The Palestinian media and Muslim preachers immediately began spreading the word that al-Aqsa was in danger. The next day, September 29, in a sermon at the mosque itself, the mullah accused Sharon of the "slighting of Muslims' holy place," and asked: "Who will forbid the Jews from committing massacres today in al-Aqsa mosque?" The same kind of false, hysterical, and inflammatory rhetoric concerning al-Aqsa had been spewed forth over the tunnel, and it worked even more effectively in this latest battle against "the Judaization of Jerusalem."

So, too, did the tactic of taking casualties for the TV cameras to photograph. Echoing Arafat's statement of 1996 that "our blood is cheap for Jerusalem," the director general of the PA information ministry now wrote: "The only way to impose our conditions is inevitably through our blood. Had it not been for this blood, the world would never have been interested in us." Hence it was the "national duty" of the Palestinians to "continue to sacrifice our martyrs."

Palestinian and other Arabs had a lot of takers both in Israel and in the rest of the world for their assertion that it was Sharon who had provoked this latest outbreak of violence. But Barak was not among them. Partly, no doubt, because he had come to believe that his own political fortunes would be improved if he could persuade a reluctant Sharon to join him in a national-unity government, but also, surely, because he knew what he knew, Barak disagreed with the widespread condemnation of the visit to the Temple Mount. "We hold the Palestinian Authority responsible for the whole round of violence," he told Lally Weymouth in an interview in *Newsweek*.

What then lies ahead? As noted at the outset, it was to some degree because the situation that obtained prior to 1993 had involved Israel in the kind of guerrilla-cum-terrorist warfare it finally could not stomach that Rabin decided to enter into the "peace process" to begin with. Now, there has been a resurgence of precisely that kind of warfare. Will the Israelis be any more able and willing to stomach it this time around?

In trying to answer that question, we have to consider two opposing factors. One is that the Palestinians, as they have boasted, are far better armed than they were before and capable of inflicting more damage than they could in the first round. But as against that consideration, there is the balancing emergence of a new mood in Israel. By making as many concessions as they did—walking, as it were, the extra mile toward peace—and then being rewarded with violence, most Israelis, beginning with Prime Minister Barak himself, seemed to have been convinced for the moment that there was no corresponding desire for peace on the Palestinian side. If so, the delusory hopes that pushed them into the "peace process" and fed it for nearly a decade might give way to a greater readiness to face the grim realities of their own situation.

To illustrate, two examples should suffice. Shlomo Avineri, a professor at the Hebrew University and a former director-general of the foreign ministry, was among the earliest and most influential Israeli proponents of the two-state solution. But he now wrote in the *Jerusalem Post* that, in having persuaded themselves that a compromise with the Palestinians had become possible, he and his fellow doves were caught up in an "illusion":

> Last summer at Camp David, Arafat rejected the most generous offer ever made to a Palestinian leader by an Israeli statesman. . . . [Then] it suddenly dawned on us that we do not have a partner: only an enemy, who cannot even find a humane word when our people are lynched. . . . What came out—on the streets, among the Palestinian elite on CNN—was sheer hatred, and a fundamental rejection of Israel. . . . [So] now we know: there is no such thing as a Palestinian leadership with whom an agreement can be reached. We are at war.

On a different level of the Israeli social spectrum, there was the mother of three in Jerusalem who was interviewed by the Associated Press. Like Avineri, she had been a supporter of the "peace process" from the start, but this woman (also like Avineri, and like almost all Israelis) was shaken to her toes by the

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murder and mutilation of two Israeli reservists who had mistakenly driven into Ramallah: "When I saw on television the Palestinian mob that lynched those two Israeli soldiers, I realized they don't want peace with us. There was such hatred in their eyes. They just want us out of the Middle East."

They just want us out of the Middle East. This is a fundamental truth that all Israelis once knew but that many either forgot or began to deny. Now they seemed to be remembering and relearning it; and in the nick of time. For they will need every ounce of spiritual and moral strength at their disposal to cope with the reality to which so many of them blinded themselves for so long.

That reality, to say it yet one more time, is summed up in the word—*jihad*—that Arafat and so many other Arabs have never stopped invoking when speaking among themselves in their own language. On those occasions, they have never bothered to pretend that the formula for peace is a "two-state solution." Nor have they had to pretend that this formula represents anything more than a temporary abandonment of the direct military action that failed in five previous wars, or a shift to a "strategy of stages" that will more circuitously and cunningly head toward the same ultimate consummation in the destruction of the Jewish state.

INDEED, AT this very moment, Palestinian and other Arab children are studying textbooks containing maps on which (as in the Egyptian proposals for regional economic development at the conference in Morocco) Israel is nowhere to be found. It is the making of such maps into a real picture of the Middle East that—to judge by their own words and deeds—remains the true objective of overwhelming numbers of Palestinians and their Arab brothers. Listen to a leading Egyptian cleric—and bear in mind that to him "occupied Palestine" embraces the whole state of Israel:

> *Jihad* in the path of Allah is a virtue that binds Muslims at all times, and it is an obligation on everyone who is able to carry it out. . . . *Jihad* to confront the enemy and liberate the pillaged land is an obligation on Muslims. . . . This is what our brothers are now doing in occupied Palestine.

When evidence was presented at his trial in Jerusalem that Adolf Eichmann, the former Nazi officer in charge of transporting the Jews of Europe to the death camps, had once said he would "die happy" because he had sent five million "enemies of the Reich" (i.e., Jews) to their graves, Hannah Arendt dismissed this as "sheer rodomontade." Is the exhortation to *jihad* by so many Arabs, from Arafat to the likes of this Egyptian cleric, sheer rodomontade? There is no more reason to think so than there was in the case of Eichmann.

A few years ago, Fouad Ajami of Johns Hopkins produced what may still be the best short article ever published on sentiment toward Israel within the Arab world—and perhaps the only such honest account by any Arab anywhere. "There has been no discernible change in the Arab attitudes toward Israel," he maintained in *U.S. News & World Report*, and went on to describe the genuine state of affairs in the world from which he himself (a Lebanese Christian by birth and upbringing) had come to the United States:

> The great refusal [to accept Israel] persists. A foul wind . . . blows in that "Arab street" of ordinary men and women, among the intellectuals and the writers, and in the professional syndicates. The force of this refusal can be seen in the press of the governments and of the oppositionists, among the secularists and the Islamists alike, in countries that have concluded diplomatic agreements with Israel and those that haven't.

Only a few weeks ago, with the new *intifada* raging, Ajami observed that his original assessment still held:

> The circle of enmity surrounding Israel has not been breached—the young boys in the West Bank displayed their great refusal to come to terms with Israel's statehood; so did the demonstrators in Arab lands, from North Africa to the Persian Gulf, whose rulers had staked a claim to moderation. Diplomacy was shown to be a pretense and a veneer.

Some of us even thought for a while that this new *intifada* might be the start of the big war—the war with missiles and tanks and heavy artillery rather than rocks and gasoline bombs and rifles—we had always feared would result from the "peace process." Arafat and his subordinates seem to have thought so, too. "Palestinian blood [will] mix with Arab blood in defense of the legitimate rights of our people," Arafat announced on October 8 in Tunis. Another PA official was more specific:

> The continuation of the Palestinian bloodshed might push part of the Arab military to carry out military operations against Israel. . . . Also, Palestinian bloodshed will push parts of the Arab countries to launch missiles against Israel as the president of Iraq did in 1991.

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Then, the very next day, Saddam Hussein himself actually threatened to take the lead in "putting an end to Zionism," or even to go it alone if the other Arab states held back.

Fortunately for Israel, and the world, most of the Arab states were not yet ready to engage Israel militarily. In late October, sixteen of the 22 member states of the Arab League met in Cairo to decide on what they should do about the current crisis. But while blasting Israel for its "crimes" and resolving to cut off relations of various kinds with it, they stopped so far short of declaring "holy war" that the Libyan delegates walked out in disgust at this "feeble" response, and the Iraqis were if anything even more contemptuous.

Meanwhile, demonstrations were being held all over the Arab world, demanding *jihad* and denouncing the Arab governments for being "too soft on Israel." For the time being, then, what Ajami calls "the peace of kings and pharaohs" still prevails. But how long can it withstand the pressures for war from every sector of Arab society?

As long, I would say, as the kings and pharaohs of the contemporary Middle East are deterred by the fear of Israel's armed might and the willingness of Israel to use it if necessary. About seven years ago, when the "peace process" was just getting under way, I gave a lecture in Jerusalem predicting that this process would lead not to peace but to another major war. During the question period, a leading dove amazed the audience by expressing total agreement with me. But, he added, "unless we convince our sons that we are doing everything possible to make peace, they will jump out of their tanks when the war comes."

He may have been right. From which one might conclude that the "peace process" was an exercise that had to be undergone if only to expose the main illusions behind it. Those illusions went beyond the idea that a compromise with the Palestinians had become possible. They extended to the notion that Israel bore at least as much blame for the Arab war against it as the Arabs did; that, if Israel were to reconcile itself to the establishment of a Palestinian state, the Arab world would reconcile itself to a Jewish one; and that it was in Israel's unilateral power to realize this vision of peaceful coexistence.

But the dream of wiping Israel off the map was not put into Arab heads by anything Israel did except enter into existence, and therefore it could not be canceled by anything Israel did except disappear. Neither the Palestinians nor their Arab brothers would remain satisfied with a Palestinian state living alongside Israel; what they wanted was a Palestinian state that would swallow up the Jewish state. And the only peace that could be achieved through the unilateral power of Israel was the peace of the grave that committing suicide would bring.

If they are finally learning all this, the sons of the older Israelis who had to relearn it themselves will not "jump out of their tanks" when the next major war erupts. But that alone could help avert such a war, by deterring the Arabs who had begun to believe, and not without good cause, that Israel was growing soft and would soon be ripe for the plucking. A strong Israel—strong not only in weaponry but in resolve and courage and the readiness to do whatever might be necessary to prevent the worst—could fend off the *jihad* that might otherwise be all but inevitable.

It could also fend off what the Israeli defense analyst Ze'ev Schiff thinks is the strategy for "bringing Israel to its knees" that Arafat has hit upon as a fallback or a prelude to *jihad*. This, according to Schiff, is "ongoing, low-level war that combines massive terrorism, guerrilla warfare, and the international media. . . . This strategy will expose Israel's Achilles' heel: an extreme sensitivity to loss of life and the kidnapping of its soldiers."

No corresponding sensitivity undermines the Palestinians. In an exceptionally objective piece, Jack Kelley of *USA Today*, describing a firefight in Ramallah in October, reported that "As darkness moves in, many of the television journalists, who had been filming on the Palestinian side . . . pack up their gear and leave. So do the youths." Kelley then, with no hint of a personal demurrer, quoted an Israeli officer on the spot: "The kids only want to die when the TV cameras are on so they can get the sympathy of the world. They'll be back tomorrow, as soon as the media arrive."

But why, asked Mark Helprin in his column in the online *Opinion Journal* of the *Wall Street Journal*, do not the Israelis—understanding full well that every youthful Palestinian casualty hurts them and strengthens Arafat in "the battle of public opinion"—use less lethal methods of riot control? To his own question, Helprin returned this answer:

> Because they cannot. . . . Every day, from the periphery and from within the rock-throwing and gasoline-bomb-tossing crowds, automatic fire is directed at the Israelis, who are thus forced to use small-unit tactics and keep themselves dispersed. The Israelis cannot close with the crowds, using shields and batons, because to do so they would need to concentrate hundreds

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or perhaps thousands of men in these battles, soldiers who in such antiquated formations would be a vulnerable and irresistible target.

In sum, up to that point in the new *intifada*, the Israelis were doing what they had to do. Palestinian propagandists were having a field day proclaiming that the Israelis were "massacring . . . innocent children." But the complaint of many Israelis was that the army had been showing too much restraint on occasions like the gunfire attacks on a Jewish neighborhood within Jerusalem itself. On the other hand, as the officer whom Kelley accompanied during the battle that day said to him, with regret but without apology, and without the sense of guilt that had turned round one of the *intifada* into a victory for the Palestinians: "Since the first day, every time we shoot a person, it is because they . . . shot at us first. You don't want to shoot civilians and kids. On the other hand, you don't want your soldiers on the frontlines to be killed."

WRITING IN late October, I have no idea of what either Barak or Arafat will do in the next few weeks, or what might be triggered by this or that step one or the other might take. One such step by the Israelis might be toward "separation," about which the new *intifada* unleashed so much talk in Israel.

Why, it was said, could Israel not unilaterally draw its own borders and leave Arafat to his own devices on the other side, relying on deterrence to protect the country from terrorist or other forms of aggression? This, for Israel, would be a substitute for a negotiated settlement, still acceding to the birth of a Palestinian state though backing away from Barak's former willingness to recognize neighborhoods in East Jerusalem as its capital. (Amid all this talk about unilateral moves by Israel, Barak also warned the Palestinians that if *they* were to issue a unilateral declaration of statehood, he would annex parts of the West Bank. To which Arafat countered with a threat of an even wider state of war.)

Even at this early date, however, it can safely be predicted that no unilateral actions by Israel such as are simplistically contemplated by the repentant Shlomo Avineri and others would bring about what most Israelis envisage as "separation." As Ephraim Sneh, Israel's deputy minister of defense, commented to the *New York Times*: "People say, 'I don't want to see anymore the Palestinians,' . . . but it doesn't work that way. The interdependence of the economies is such that you can't just detach them mechanically. We share water, electricity, electromagnetic space. It's not so simple."

Shlomo Gazit, a former general and government official, also quoted by the *Times*, brought up other difficulties attendant upon a real separation: "It means annexing the West Bank with its settlers, but also evacuating others." Gazit could not bring himself to state clearly, or possibly even to contemplate, that "evacuating others" might involve not only Palestinians in the West Bank but also Arab citizens of Israel, together with non-Israeli Palestinians who live in East Jerusalem. It is hard to imagine the Israelis undertaking so brutal an act of "ethnic cleansing," and still harder to suppose that the West would allow them to carry it through even if they made the attempt.

The upshot is that under present circumstances, there are no good alternatives, only choices that may be less bad than others. Still, present circumstances will not last forever. History could yet hit the Middle East with one of those unexpected surprises in which it specializes (such as the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union) and that would for the first time create a willingness among the Arabs to make their own inner peace with the permanent presence of a sovereign Jewish state in "their" part of the world. But unless and until such a change of heart cancels out "the great refusal," the change of heart in Israel that the new *intifada* seemed to have wrought in certain quarters will have to remain firm against the seductive temptations of a return to some new form of Oslo. It will also have to remain firm against the loudly intransigent insistence in other quarters that the "peace process" can and must be revived.

It is from those other quarters that the "post-Zionist" virus of self-hatred has spread in recent years, sapping the national morale and the old-time national resolve. To regain what they have lost, the Israelis will have to shake off this pathology once and for all; they will have to rely credibly once again on the deterrent effect of their military might; they will have to renew their conviction that their country has an absolute right to exist where it exists; and they will have to recapture the well-earned and well-deserved pride they used to feel in the miracle of that existence and the wondrous accomplishments that have followed from the Jewish return to Zion.

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Intifada II: What the U.S. Should Do

Daniel Pipes

For decades, the United States has pursued a fairly consistent policy toward the Arab-Israel conflict: help Israel be strong, while pressuring it to make concessions. So ingrained has this dual approach become that it is hardly noticed. Everyone expects Washington to provide financial aid to Israel, sell it high-technology armaments, and support it diplomatically in the United Nations. At the same time, it is also assumed that American leaders will press Israel to make territorial concessions to its adversaries.

In some sense, this dual policy is not America's alone, and in some sense it also goes back to the very origins of the Jewish state. Under British pressure, for example, Israel turned its conquests in the Sinai Peninsula over to Egypt in 1949; under American pressure, it did the same thing again in 1957. But it was not until 1967, following Israel's huge victory over three Arab states in the Six-Day war, that the policy of strengthen and pressure began to take the form it holds today. That policy may be summed up in a slogan that emerged soon after the war: "land for peace."

"Land for peace" refers to the two main clauses in United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, the document that ever since has served as the basis of American diplomacy. Two aspects of that resolution are worth mentioning.

First, the deal outlined by Resolution 242 was unbalanced. This is evident in the language of the resolution itself. The "land" clause is terse and to the point, calling for the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories of recent conflict." By contrast, the "peace" clause is wordier and vaguer (and also ungrammatical), calling for "termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every state in the area and their [*sic*] right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force."

The dissimilarity in the wording of the two clauses points to the underlying asymmetry of the deal. Israel was to give up land, a real and vital asset; in return, it was to receive wispy, retractable, and ambiguous promises of peace. The imbalance is the more profound when one recalls that Israel, a defensive power, was taxed not only with making the lion's share of concessions but also with taking a leap of faith by trusting the word of neighbors who had on many occasions aggressed against it; in return, those neighbors merely needed to mouth the right words in order to receive the territories they had lost when Israel defeated them. Few, if any, can be the cases in world history of a victori-

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ous party's being asked both to make the concessions and to take the risks.

Second, Resolution 242 appealed to both parties (but especially the Arabs) to move beyond what might be termed the deterrent peace that had existed in the Middle East since 1948 and instead establish a true, harmonious peace. These are two very different concepts. Deterrent peace is what the United States had with the Soviet Union. It is a peace based on mutual fear, on the assumption that neither party dares risk the consequences of full-scale war; such a peace often breaks down, and can periodically lead to violent conflict. Harmonious peace, by contrast, is what Americans and Canadians enjoy; based on trade, travel, and a myriad of human contacts, it assumes that, whatever differences there may be, they will never lead to violence and will always be "free from threats or acts of force," to use the language of Resolution 242.

In short, the return of land by Israel was supposed to take it from a state of venomous hostility to a state of harmony with its Arab neighbors in a single bound; and it was supposed to do so quickly. This, to say the least, was an unrealistic expectation.

There was nothing inevitable about land for peace as a formula, or as a basis of subsequent policy. The resolution could just as well have called for land for land, peace for peace, land for nothing, or something else entirely. Subsequent conquests of territory in the Middle East in the decades after 1967 have met with responses on the part of the international community that have run the gamut from complete passivity (the Syrian takeover of Lebanon) to huge multilateral intervention (the Iraqi seizure of Kuwait). Nevertheless, in 1967 land for peace was the approach that the U.S. and British governments proposed, that the United Nations Security Council passed, and that Israel accepted. To make the deal more palatable, the U.S. government, having rightly concluded that its own constancy as an ally would ease the way for Israel to turn over land, assumed with greater vigor its role as a supporter of the Jewish state.

As long as the Arabs remained unwilling to offer any peaceable assurances to Israel, the inherent imbalance of Resolution 242 raised no serious issues. But, starting with the Sinai I agreement made with Egypt in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur war of 1973, Arab states increasingly began to show a willingness to say what 242 required. The words may have been issued through gritted teeth, they may have been said in English and not repeated in Arabic, and they may have come freighted with conditions and angry demands, but they began to be said. In the case of Egypt, indeed, such statements led by the end of the 1970's to formal diplomatic relations with Israel; by the mid-1990's, Jordan had followed suit. Over the years, even such unrelenting enemies of Israel as the Palestinian, Syrian, and Saudi leaders have uttered grudging words of acceptance.

For their part, Israelis tended to see most such Arab statements as inherently suspect if not downright untrustworthy: coerced, temporary, and reversible. The case of Egypt seemed at first to constitute something of an exception, as President Anwar Sadat's forthright and emotional overture to Israel in 1977 resulted in the almost immediate give-back of the entire Sinai Peninsula. But disappointment over the "cold peace" with Egypt that followed soured the Israelis for years on other such deals. This Israeli reluctance in turn led to periodic tensions with the U.S. government, which would press Israel to accept those Arab statements as valid assurances and to fork over land in exchange.

Then, in 1993, for reasons having to do with its own domestic politics, the government of Israel radically changed its position, and of a sudden adopted the American analysis as its own. Out went two decades of doubts, in came a willingness to accept even equivocal Arab statements at face value and sometimes to dispense with them altogether as a precondition for territorial concessions. In his negotiations with the Palestinians and the Syrians, Yitzhak Rabin, the then newly elected prime minister, no longer worried very much about Arab credibility, motives, or ulterior goals. Shimon Peres, Rabin's foreign minister (and his intellectual mentor in this shift of policy), went so far as to dismiss even openly *hostile* Palestinian statements with a disdainful shrug: "These are only words. Let them talk."

The new attitude on the part of Israel's government broke the logjam. In the years following Oslo, it signed a torrent of agreements with the Palestinians, as well as a peace treaty with Jordan. Accords with Syria and its Lebanese satrapy would surely have followed had not Syria's president, Hafez al-Assad, for reasons of his own, rejected Israel's very forthcoming terms for both Syria and Lebanon.

HAS THE policy of land for peace, then, been vindicated? Quite the contrary. Yes, it won treaties with two of Israel's neighbors, Egypt and Jordan, and a smattering of lesser diplomatic relations with outlying Arab states (Morocco, Tunisia, Qatar). It indubitably improved the country's standing with the European Union, India, China,

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Japan, and other governments around the world. And it paid off economically: the boom experienced by Israel in the 1990's can be partly attributed to a greater global willingness to trade and invest in the country. Finally, it eased international tensions to the point that Turkey could come to regard Israel as one of its closest partners.

But land for peace emphatically did not achieve its main objective, which was the harmonious condition envisioned by Resolution 242. Rather, in compliance with that resolution, Israel turned over one piece of land after another to every single one of its four neighboring states, plus the Palestinians, and all it got in return—the most it got in return—was the same old deterrent peace. Although Arab governments have signed formal agreements with Israel, their people have demonstrated few signs of accepting the Jewish state. (Notable exceptions include some Christians in Lebanon, some businessmen, and some military officers.) Egyptians, Jordanians, and others have preferred not to engage in trade, tourism, or other forms of human contact; their expressed hostility toward the very idea of a sovereign Jewish state has remained markedly strong; and they continue to threaten the use of force. If they have not actually resorted to arms, that has been due only to the fearsomeness of Israel's expected reaction.

Worse, land for peace in the era of Oslo has actually harmed Israel, by making it much less scary to its neighbors than it once was. Handing over territory, a gesture of good will intended to elicit good will in return, has instead been seen as a sign of Israeli weakness—and in a region where, in the apt words of Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak, "there is no mercy for the weak . . . and no second opportunity for those who cannot defend themselves."

True, this did not happen all at once. So long as Israel proceeded carefully and reluctantly, and balanced its concessions with toughness, it managed to retain its formidable reputation. But with the profound change inaugurated in 1993, the Arab side, not without reason, began to perceive Israel as a country tired of fighting and eager to extract itself from conflict as quickly and as cheaply as possible. Israel's withdrawal under fire from southern Lebanon in May 2000, and its failure to exact retribution when Palestinians desecrated Joseph's Tomb in October, were perhaps the most dramatic confirmation of the Arabs' new understanding of Israel's exhaustion and demoralization, but there have been hundreds of others.

The result has been to whet Arab ambitions. If, before 1993, one could sense a slow movement toward coming to terms with Israel's existence, this has long since yielded to a conviction that Israel is on the run. The eruption of Palestinian violence in late September of this year made the trend obvious to all, yet the street fighting is only part of the story. At least as significant has been the flare-up of anti-Israel vitriol among Muslims from Morocco to Indonesia, the likes of which has not been seen since the glory days of Gamal Abdel Nasser before his 1967 defeat. (At a summit meeting of Arabs in mid-October, it actually seemed possible that the assembled kings, emirs, and presidents might declare war—an option not even on the table for decades.) No less important has been the unprecedented and large-scale turn to violence by Israel's own Arab citizens. Finally, the nearly 200 violent attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions that have taken place on six continents open an almost completely new front in this conflict.

RATHER THAN discouraging hostile Arab intentions, then, land for peace has exacerbated them. What Israel achieved in war, diplomacy has undone.

To make matters still worse, there has been little evidence so far that Israelis have seen the error of their ways, or that they have any idea of how to extricate themselves from this morass. Facing the radicalization of its enemies, Jerusalem has dithered. In October, in the midst of the violence, Prime Minister Barak issued an ultimatum to Yasir Arafat and then conspicuously failed to enforce it; he retaliated for the cold-blooded lynching of Israeli reserve soldiers in Ramallah by blasting *empty* Palestinian buildings; and he called for a diplomatic "time-out" that signaled his readiness to return to the table, and thus to the policy of land for peace, if only the violence would stop. The one large-scale solution that has been proposed for Israel's current troubles—separating the Israeli and Palestinian populations—neither addresses the issue of hundreds of millions of angry Muslims around the world nor deals with the suddenly enflamed Arab population within Israel's own borders. There seems little reason to expect the Israeli body politic, or its leadership, to come to grips with the problem anytime soon.

And the United States? From a cold-blooded point of view, it would be convenient for Americans if the burgeoning hostility toward Israel were Israel's problem alone. After all, even if Israel's concessions over the last years have had precisely the wrong effect on Arab attitudes toward the Jewish state, they *have* won a certain measure of good will

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among Arabs toward the United States. The Oslo process softened some of the anti-Americanism endemic to the Middle East, thereby rendering oil sources slightly more secure, anti-American terrorism a bit less likely, and political harangues less impassioned. Unsurprisingly, American diplomats, businessmen, scholars, and tourists all endorse basing negotiations on the idea of land for peace, and would like such negotiations to go on indefinitely.

Unfortunately, the point has been reached at which land for peace entails dangers to American strategic interests far greater than its benefits. Israel's perceived weakness is now an American problem, and the aggressive euphoria being expressed by the Arabic-speaking masses poses a direct threat to the United States. Were the excitement of the Arab "street"* and its fury at Israel actually to lead to war, the United States would experience enormously harmful repercussions. War could cause the oil market to gyrate out of control and do real damage to the world economy (as it did following the Arab-Israeli fighting of 1973); it could rupture American relations with Muslim-majority states; and it could inspire a campaign of terrorism against American institutions and individuals, abroad and at home.

Were that war to go badly for Israel, moreover, the implications for Americans would become truly dire. Like it or not, the United States serves as Israel's ultimate, informal, but very real security guarantor. If it were on the ropes—imagine battleground defeats or unconventional Iraqi warheads dropping on cities—Israel might threaten, and perhaps even use, nuclear weapons. This is one of the worst nightmares of American policy planners, for it almost necessitates deploying American troops to protect Israel. And even absent the nuclear threat, Americans are hardly likely to stand idly by, indifferent to the fate of Israel and its Jewish population; that is not the American way.

Still, saving Israel in war is hardly a prospect American military analysts can contemplate with relish. Doing so would necessitate drawing down American forces in other parts of the world. It would compel the United States to confront states it would rather cooperate with, and entail unknown consequences for the economy and even the physical safety of U.S. citizens. Far better, from the American point of view, that there not be another Arab-Israeli war.

WHAT THEN is Washington's best course? It is to take steps to ensure that Israel's potential enemies are discouraged from starting such a war. This means, to be blunt about it, giving up on the policy of land for peace and its attendant promises of harmony, and being content instead with reestablishing a lasting deterrent peace.

Specifically, there are three things the U.S. government might do. First, it should take more seriously the need to maintain the Israeli military's qualitative edge. While American politicians glibly and routinely repeat their commitment to this goal, the fact is that a willingness to sell arms to some of Israel's potential enemies has vastly enhanced their capabilities. The most dramatic instance is Egypt, where the army, air force, and navy have all been thoroughly outfitted in American technology, cutting significantly into the Israeli advantage. Other examples include Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and several Persian Gulf emirates. This policy needs to be reconsidered.

Second, there is the diplomatic side of the U.S.-Israel connection. Admittedly, that connection is already legendarily close, to the point that it deeply confuses many Arabs. But in fact, as we have had occasion to see time and again, ambiguities exist in the relationship that now need to be closed off. In the United Nations, for example, Washington occasionally permits ugly, one-sided resolutions to pass in the Security Council, where the U.S. holds the power of veto. Most recently, on October 7, Washington abstained from (rather than vetoing) a resolution that condemned "acts of violence, especially the excessive use of force against Palestinians," but that said not a single word about Palestinian provocations or violence. This distancing of the United States from Israel further stokes Arab ambitions.

On another diplomatic front, there has been the tendency, especially on the part of President Clinton in his role as arbiter, to treat Israel and its negotiating opposites as morally equivalent, equally right and equally wrong. Not only is this mistaken on the merits—Israel is a democracy and a foremost American ally, Syria and the Palestinian Authority are autocratic adversaries of the United States—but it inspires the Arabs to think they can isolate Israel politically from the United States.

Third, rather than pressing Israel to make still further concessions to the Arabs, Americans should embolden it to appear mighty and indomitable. If Israelis on their own are having trouble regaining their sense of purpose and mobilizing their courage, it is their friends' place not only to express worry on this score but to buck them up. Now is

* This term is a literal translation of the Arabic word used to describe public opinion.

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not the moment to urge Israel to take even more "risks for peace"; now is the moment, rather, to help Israel inculcate in its neighbors a healthy sense of the consequences of their bellicosity.

Is it likely that the U.S. government would embark on such a reversal of longstanding policy, especially after so much has been invested in the illusions of land for peace? The signs are hardly propitious. Nevertheless, this is surely the direction that is dictated by American interests (not to speak of American concern for the future of Israel). One thing is certain, moreover: there would be no dearth of support for such a move, either among Americans at large or among American politicians.

Several of the latter, indeed, have already expressed their frustration with Israel's limp response to its enemies. Senator Charles Schumer of New York, a Democrat, has said that he would, for the Israelis' own protection, "put more pressure on them to do more to go after Hamas and the terrorist groups," while Jesse Helms of North Carolina, a Republican, responded to last summer's Camp David summit by saying that in his opinion Barak's concessions there "went too far" and that the borders contemplated at the summit "leave Israel vulnerable." This sort of thinking is a great deal more widespread in the United States than one might suppose from listening to White House spokesmen or leading editorialists.

Israel now presents its ally with a unique dilemma. Washington may have looked on with disquiet as Britain and France signed a document promising "peace for our time" at Munich in 1938, and Israel itself watched in dismay as the United States lost the war in Vietnam and proceeded to sink into what President Jimmy Carter would famously describe as "malaise." But none of these countries took steps so drastic as Israel's since 1993. Britain and France were, after all, appeasing Hitler by giving up Czechoslovakia, not their own territory. The United States lost a war thousands of miles away. In contrast, Israel is finding it hard to protect its own soil and people from an enemy that is literally a stone's throw away.

Israel's acute demoralization thus places upon the United States an urgent and unusual burden: the need to firm up a democratic ally's will to resist. One can only hope, for the sake of both countries, that the challenge is met, and soon.

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Intifada II: Israel's Nightmare

Hillel Halkin

ISRAEL IS in bad trouble. It is in far worse trouble than it was in September 1993, when the Oslo agreement was signed. This needs to be said to those in the Israeli "peace camp" and to its supporters in the United States and elsewhere who, having jubilantly celebrated that agreement while refusing to recognize its terrible flaws, now protest: "Perhaps Oslo has not worked out as we hoped, but what alternative was there? Under the circumstances, it was something that had to be tried, and there is no need to regret having tried it."

But there is every need, not only to regret Oslo, but to beat one's breast with horror at what one has done. Nothing about the circumstances in 1993 justified taking such a risk. And there were alternatives—or, at the very least, the same alternative that Israel has now, except under far more favorable circumstances.

The first half of 1993 was not a bad year for Israel. The newly elected government of Yitzhak Rabin had inherited from Yitzhak Shamir a country in good economic shape with a solid national consensus on key issues of security and on minimal conditions for peace with the Arab world; those conditions included Israeli control of the Golan Heights, parts of western Samaria, the "Etsion bloc" of settlements in the Judean Hills, the Jordan Valley, and greater Jerusalem. The *intifada* of the late 80's and early 90's had largely subsided. Palestinians were working in Israel in large numbers, and incidents of terror were few. The PLO, its influence and finances at a post-Gulf war low, was sidelined in Tunis. Israel's international standing had improved. The peace with Egypt, while cold, was holding. The borders with Jordan and Syria were quiet, and contacts with both countries, formalized by the 1991 Madrid conference, were going on. The Hezbollah in Lebanon was not yet the efficient fighting force it soon would become.

True, this was not a situation that could have continued indefinitely. The military occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip inflicted a fundamental injustice on the Palestinians that was intolerable not only for them but for any thinking Israeli—and in any case, purely demographic considerations ruled out long-term retention of most of the Palestinian territories, since Palestinian Arabs had one of the world's highest birth rates and would eventually outnumber Jews west of the Jordan. Palestinian support for the Hamas terrorist organization was on the rise. Although the balance of military power with the Arab world was in Israel's favor, the Gulf war had shown Israel to be both militarily and psychologically vulnerable to missile attack.

Something, then, had to be done, some new course of action needed to be taken. But there was

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no emergency. There was time to deliberate, to thrash out issues in public debate, to weigh the pros and cons of possible moves.

What might those moves have been? One was to offer the Palestinian population of the territories genuine self-rule without dealing the PLO in on it. You say this would not have worked because, as had already been proved at the Madrid conference (where the supposedly non-PLO negotiators turned out to be PLO-approved after all), the Palestinian population lacked independent leadership? Perhaps not; but in that case Israel might have tried negotiating with the PLO in Tunis without, as it did at Oslo, precipitously admitting it into the territories it claimed with its leaders, its organizational structure, its armed battalions, and a degree of international legitimation and financial backing never enjoyed by it before. The PLO, you say, would never have agreed to talks along such lines or enabled them to be concluded successfully? Perhaps not; but in that case there was still the option of unilateral Israeli action—that is, of Israel's deciding on its own what its borders should be, withdrawing its troops and citizens to them, and letting the Palestinians fend for themselves on the other side. Such an option was never realistic? Perhaps not; but it is precisely the one that the Barak government, much of the Israeli Left, and the great majority of Israelis who supported Oslo have now been calling for.

This, then, is the absurdity: the same unilateral separation of Israel from the Palestinian territories that, if capable of execution today, was far more so in 1993-94—that at the time would have met with international sympathy as a major Israeli concession and would not have had to be carried out in the teeth of an armed PLO state—that would have saved seven years of internal dissension that tragically tore Israeli society apart—that might have prevented the assassination of Rabin and the bloodshed of the 1995-96 PLO-Hamas terror campaign—is now the mantra of those who have no regrets over Oslo!

II

IS UNILATERAL disengagement possible now? In terms of Israeli politics, the answer is yes. Not only did such a course of action suddenly appear to be the only game in town following the collapse of negotiations with the Palestinian Authority and the outbreak of violence, but it has become, for Israelis, a highly attractive one. Unilateral separation, it is said, would return the initiative to Israel, dispelling the oppressive feeling of helplessness that became the prevailing mood after the "peace process" turned into daily violence, and free the country of a large Palestinian Arab population that Israelis are now prepared to say goodbye to once and for all. Indeed, "prepared" is too mild a word; "eager" or even "desperate" would be more accurate.

Given the long history of violence and counter-violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there might appear to be no logical reason why Israeli attitudes toward Palestinians should have changed so radically after the bloodshed began on September 29, going beyond frustration, anger, or even hate to ultimate revulsion and despair. Perhaps, then, the change may turn out to be only temporary; perhaps, if and when the current round of clashes subsides, these emotions will prove transitory. One doubts it, however. For what Israelis have seen on the Palestinian side, projected with unprecedented clarity on their TV screens, has also gone beyond frustration, anger, and even hate. They have seen a society that, whether in the form of its street mobs, its politicians, or its supposed intellectuals, seems so easily incitable, so emotionally collectivized, so blindly conformist and devoid of thinking individuals, so incapable of distinguishing between truth and falsehood or subjecting itself to the slightest degree of self-criticism or self-analysis that—not for the first time, certainly, but possibly for the last—they have asked: are these people we can expect, or ever want, to live together with?

The point is not that Israeli actions have themselves been beyond reproach; it is that—on television, over the radio, and in the newspapers, let alone in private conversation—Israelis *have* reproached themselves, often excessively, whereas even in the rare instances in which their Palestinian counterparts have done the same, it has been a calculated performance for the media. (As in the case, for example, of the Palestinian police chief of Ramallah, who, several days after its occurrence, expressed his dismay over the lynching in one of his police stations of two Israeli soldiers, not one of whose murderers, all known to him, had been arrested by his police.) If Palestinians with Ph.D's from American universities could tell reporters without blushing that thousands of stone-and-firebomb-throwing youths were "peaceful demonstrators" and that Israeli soldiers were deliberately firing to kill them—in the face of photographs and statistics showing the exact opposite*—whom was there to talk with, and about what?

* As of late October, the Palestinians were claiming close to 4,000 wounded and some 140 killed, or a proportion of wounded to killed of 30 to one. Since in battlefield conditions the proportion of wounded to killed usually runs in the neighborhood of three or four to one, it is clear that Israeli soldiers, unless they were the world's worst shots, were deliberately trying *not* to kill.

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The argument has been made that Israel cannot live in a truly dependable peace with its Arab neighbors until these neighbors enjoy democratic governments. But what should have been apparent by now is that the historic inability of 21 Arab-Muslim states to produce a single democratic regime such as has been achieved by numerous other non-Western people—the Japanese, the Indians, the Koreans, the Thais, and the Taiwanese, to name but some—is a symptom of a much deeper illness. Something is wrong at a more profound level, something that goes to the heart of Arab-Muslim society and is structurally rooted in its fundamental values and relationships. It is this something that Israelis have found themselves staring in the face this fall. A large number of them have come to the conclusion that they do not want to have to look at it any more.

THUS, FOR the first time since the 1973 Yom Kippur war, a strong political consensus has formed in Israeli society. It is a consensus built on the ruins of two dreams, the nationalistic Right's dream of Jewish possession of, or at least presence in, an undivided land of Israel that would also be inhabited by many Palestinians, and the universalistic Left's dream of Jewish-Arab rapprochement. Although die-hard ideologues in both these camps have continued to resist the obvious, the great majority of Israelis want out—out of the conflict with the Palestinians, out of more than minimal contact with them, and out of the territories they are concentrated in. The political basis for unilateral separation exists.

Economically, too, such a separation, assuming it would mean closed borders with minimal movement of goods and labor across them, would be feasible. An economic divorce would have a devastating effect on the small Palestinian economy, which has been heavily dependent on Israel for employing its work force and buying its products; but for Israel, whose GNP is fifteen times greater than that of the Palestinian Authority, the consequences would be negligible. Some Israeli companies that sell to Palestinians in significant quantities, such as manufacturers of chemicals, cement, processed food, and soft drinks, would be hurt; sectors like agriculture and the building trade, which have employed large numbers of Palestinians, would suffer temporarily. But overall goods and services sold to the Palestinian market have accounted for less than 10 percent of Israel's total exports; and more foreign workers from Asia and Eastern Europe, of whom there are already tens of thousands in Israel, could easily be brought in to take up the labor slack. Separation might make Israel's economy sputter briefly, but no more than that.

Diplomatically, by contrast, Israel would be in a highly difficult position. Whether before or after, unilateral separation would be accompanied by the declaration of a Palestinian state claiming as its borders the 1967 ceasefire lines between Jordan and Israel; indeed, such a state may have already been declared by the time this article appears. Since this state would be recognized by a large part of the international community—including the General Assembly of the United Nations, some or all of the countries of Europe, and perhaps eventually the United States—any part of its territory remaining in Israeli hands would be regarded as occupied by a foreign invader. (Although the world considers Israel today, too, to be an occupying power in the West Bank and Gaza, its military presence in these territories has been viewed not as illegal but as a stopgap measure until the issue of sovereignty in them will have been resolved.) And since the logic of unilateral separation is that Israel would, without Palestinian agreement, keep parts of the West Bank and possibly Gaza that it deems essential, it would be in clear violation of international law, leaving it open to punitive measures while legitimizing armed Palestinian attacks on its citizens and settlements as a form of just war.

Such a state of affairs in fact would seem precisely what the Palestinian Authority has lately been aiming for, and may very well have had in mind since Oslo—that is, not the ending of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict but its perpetuation along more advantageous lines. And the advantages gained by the Palestinians would be great, for whereas in 1993 Israel was the legally recognized administrator of the territories facing at most a few dozen active Palestinian guerrillas bearing arms, it would now be an internationally condemned aggressor forced to cope with 40,000 or more Palestinian "policemen" equipped with assault rifles, machine guns, and other weaponry. Nor would its annexation of parts of these territories even be taken seriously as a sign of determination to remain in them—not when every Israeli prime minister since Oslo had offered to return the Golan Heights, officially annexed in 1981, to Syria, and Prime Minister Barak proposed at Camp David to surrender sections of Jerusalem annexed in 1967.

Unilateral separation would thus inevitably lead to military hostilities with the Palestinian state, in which Israel would be unable to count on international or possibly even American support. These

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hostilities, to be sure, so long as the rest of the Arab world was not drawn into them (though it might very well be), would not involve a full-scale war, in which the Palestinian Authority would stand no chance of success. Rather, they would take the form of guerrilla warfare in which Palestinian forces carried out low-magnitude daily operations against Israel while at the same time resorting to urban terror. Would Israel be able to fight such a campaign better because it had separated from the territories? This is ultimately the key question—and one to which the answer is probably no.

IN PURELY physical terms, it is not easy to envisage exactly what, on the ground, unilateral separation would entail. Presumably it would mean erecting as hermetic a border as possible between a Palestinian state and an Israel that included greater Jerusalem, the Etsion bloc, parts of western Samaria, and possibly the Katif settlements in the southern Gaza Strip, while evacuating a large number of small Israeli settlements elsewhere in Gaza and the West Bank. In a situation of guerrilla warfare, this would enable Israel to concentrate its forces more efficiently; to avoid having to establish numerous small garrisons of troops for the protection of dozens of Israeli enclaves surrounded by Palestinian towns and villages; and to obviate the necessity of having to patrol and clear the roads leading to these enclaves. On the face of it, this makes military sense.

And yet apart from the enormous difficulty and expense of relocating the evacuated settlers, such a scenario is problematic. What about the Jordan Valley, for instance, control of which would be crucial not only as a first line of defense against a possible attack of Arab countries joining the fighting from the east but also for cutting off the Palestinians from their Arab allies and preventing them from being supplied with reinforcements and heavy weapons? With the Jewish settlements in eastern Samaria and Judea having been evacuated, Israeli forces in the Jordan Valley would become more isolated and exposed, and the roads leading to them would be harder to keep open. Moreover, Palestinian guerrilla units would be able to move in their own areas with less chance of being detected or intercepted.

Nor would the evacuation of Israeli settlements necessarily reduce points of friction or lower the overall level of violence. No matter what borders Israel were to withdraw to, numerous Israeli settlements would be left in putative Palestinian territory close to or practically on these borders, easily reached by Palestinian infiltrators and Palestinian bullets. As is shown by the case of Gilo, the southernmost Jewish neighborhood of Jerusalem that was repeatedly hit by small-arms fire from Palestinian Bethlehem this fall, the distances involved are simply too small for there to be any withdrawal to relatively safe lines.

Would an electronic security fence along the unilaterally determined border with the Palestinians, similar to the fences Israel now has on its borders with Lebanon and Jordan, solve the problem? Hardly. The expense, time, and labor needed to erect such a fence, which would zigzag back and forth over hundreds of kilometers of hilly terrain and over many more running through urban areas around Jerusalem, would be horrendous. And as has been true of Israel's other borders in the past, the army units patrolling such a barrier would themselves become regular targets. Moreover, security fences work both ways: while making it more difficult for the enemy to enter your territory, they hinder you from entering his in response or in hot pursuit. Finally, experience has shown that such fences, while effective, are never 100-percent hermetic. They can be cut and crossed by properly trained forces, and, needless to say, by mortars and rockets aimed far into the interior.

In short, unilateral separation would give Israel no military advantage that would not be balanced or outweighed by its disadvantages. It would not significantly increase Israel's security and would certainly win it no points in the international arena. It is an appealing idea to Israelis for understandable reasons. It is just not particularly practical. Perhaps it was in 1993; but no longer.

III

IF UNILATERAL separation would not dramatically improve a situation that is in fact likely to get progressively worse, what should Israel do? Swallow its pride, return to the negotiating table with the PLO, and do what it can to hammer out a deal in spite of everything?

Alas, this too would not be practical. Pride could be swallowed, of course. But to believe, at this late date, that the PLO really wants a deal, or, more crucially, that it would stick to the terms of one once it had been arrived at, would be to cling pathetically to the illusion of PLO moderation and good will that led to Oslo in the first place. It is common knowledge that, in their talks at Camp David, Ehud Barak offered Yasir Arafat concessions that would have been unimaginable in Israel as lit-

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tle as a year ago: nearly all of the West Bank and Gaza, nearly all of Arab Jerusalem, an additional sliver of the Israeli Negev, Israeli absorption of a large number of Palestinian refugees. Had Arafat been interested in a final settlement, here was his golden opportunity. These were, after all, Barak's *starting* positions; with the help of American mediation and pressure on Israel, Arafat could have gotten even more. (Including, no doubt, Palestinian sovereignty over the Temple Mount, which many Israelis would not particularly have minded letting him have.)

But a final settlement was never Arafat's goal. That goal was to get as much as he could by taking the road opened by Oslo and then to abandon it before it reached its final destination. An internationally recognized Palestinian state still partially occupied by Israel that would allow the Palestinians to fight on while engaging Israel in a long-term war of attrition in which its hands would be tied, and which chronically threatened to explode into a regional conflagration, was an almost ideal situation for him.

For Israel, however, it is a nightmare. Told for years that peace was just around the corner, Israelis today are ill-prepared to make the conceptual switch now called for and adjust to a new period of prolonged danger in which military victory is not even imaginable—or rather a situation in which the reoccupation of the West Bank and Gaza, though easily accomplishable in the space of a few days or perhaps even a few hours, would be politically futile.

When once asked by a friend in the good old days of post-Oslo euphoria why I perversely insisted on being so gloomy about the future, I answered with a parable. Imagine, I said, two families living in a house over which they have constantly quarreled. One family is stronger and forces its decisions on the other; but the weaker family has homeless relatives who roam the street outside and occasionally fire bullets through the stronger family's windows. Naturally this makes things uncomfortable, and so one day the stronger family says to the weaker: "Look, we are going to divide this house between us. But since we cannot decide at the moment who gets which rooms, why not in the meantime invite your gun-toting relatives to move in with you? That way they will stop shooting and we can discuss things calmly until we reach an agreement." That is very generous, I said to my friend; but what happens if in the end they don't agree?

We are about to find out.

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Intifada II: The Long Trail of Arab Anti-Semitism

Efraim Karsh

FOR ANYONE still disposed to credit the standard Muslim-Arab contention that, so far as Palestine is concerned, Arabs have never had anything against Judaism or Jews but only against Zionism and Zionists, this fall's anti-Israel riots should have gone far to dispel any remaining illusions. And if not the riots themselves, or the wanton destruction of ancient Jewish sites in Nablus and Jericho, then the words accompanying them; and if not the words shouted by frenzied mobs, then the presumably more reflective words articulated by leaders and dignitaries.

To pluck but one example from the flood of high-level anti-Jewish invective, here are a few snippets from a sermon delivered on October 13 by Ahmad Abu Halabiya, former acting rector of the Islamic University in Gaza. The sermon, given the day after the barbaric lynching of two Israeli soldiers in the West Bank city of Ramallah, was broadcast live on the official television channel of Yasir Arafat's Palestinian Authority:

> Have no mercy on the Jews, *no matter where they are, in any country* [emphasis added]. Fight them, wherever you are. Wherever you meet them, kill them. Wherever you are, kill those Jews and those Americans who are like them and those who stand by them. They are all in one trench against the Arabs and the Muslims because they established Israel here, in the beating heart of the Arab world, in Palestine.

Of course, it has long been a staple of Arab diplomacy that such sentiments themselves are to be understood as an expression of frustration with Zionism, not with Jews or Judaism. After all, did not Arabs and Jews coexist harmoniously for centuries prior to the advent of the Zionist movement? As Fayez A. Sayegh, the Kuwaiti representative, told the United Nations General Assembly during the debate over the "Zionism-is-racism" resolution in November 1975: "We in the Arab world showed hospitality to Jews who came fleeing from persecution in Europe when European anti-Semitism was driving them into our arms; . . . it was only when the Zionists came that, despite our hospitality to the Jew, we showed hostility to the Zionist."

But this idyllic picture is likewise at odds with the historical record. True, persecution of Jews in the medieval and modern Islamic world never reached the scale of Christian Europe. But that did not spare the "Jews of Islam" (to use the phrase of the historian Bernard Lewis) from centuries of legally institutionalized inferiority, humiliating social restrictions, and the sporadic rapacity of local officials and the Muslim population at large. In pre-Zionist Palestine itself, Arab peasants, revolting in the 1830's against a military conscription imposed

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by Egyptian authorities, took the occasion to ravage the Jewish communities of Safed and Jerusalem, and when Arab forces arrived from Egypt to quell the insurrection, they slaughtered the Jews of Hebron in turn. A century later, in June 1941, following an abortive pro-Nazi coup in Iraq, the Jews of Baghdad were subjected to a horrendous massacre in which hundreds perished. And so forth.

The truth of the matter is that, for all their protestations to the contrary, Arabs have never really distinguished among Zionists, Israelis, and Jews, and often use these terms interchangeably. As Anis Mansur, one of Egypt's foremost journalists and a one-time confidant of President Anwar Sadat, put it in a moment of candor: "There is no such thing in the world as Jew and Israeli. Every Jew is an Israeli. No doubt about that." Indeed, the fact that Arab anti-Zionism has invariably reflected a hatred well beyond the "normal" level of hostility to be expected of a prolonged and bitter conflict would seem to suggest that, rather than being a response to Zionist activity, it is rather a manifestation of longstanding prejudice that has been brought out into the open by the vicissitudes of the Arab-Israel conflict.

This is hardly to deny the clash of destinies between two national groups. But it is precisely because Zionism was construed as epitomizing the worst characteristics traditionally associated with Jews in the Muslim-Arab mind that the Zionist enterprise could be portrayed in so lurid a light by politicians and intellectuals alike. As Lutfi Abd al-Azim, the editor of a prestigious Egyptian weekly, wrote in 1982, three years after the conclusion of an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty:

> A Jew is a Jew, and hasn't changed for thousands of years. He is base, contemptible, scorns all moral values, gnaws on live flesh, and sucks blood for a pittance. The Jewish Merchant of Venice is no different from the arch-executioners of Deir Yasin and those at the [Palestinian] refugee camps. Both are similar models of inhuman depravity.

WHERE DO such vicious stereotypes come from? It has been rightly observed that modern, ideological anti-Semitism is an invention of 19th-century Europe, and that traditionally the Islamic world was by and large free of such "doctrinaire refinements" (in the phrase of the late Elie Kedourie). But the ease and rapidity with which the precepts of European anti-Semitism were assimilated by the Muslim-Arab world testify to the pre-existence of a deep anti-Jewish bigotry. This bigotry dates to Islam's earliest days, and indeed to the Qur'an itself.

Reflecting the Prophet Muhammad's outrage over the rejection of his religious message by the contemporary Jewish community, both the Qur'an and later biographical traditions of the Prophet abound with negative depictions of Jews. In these works they are portrayed as a deceitful, evil, and treacherous people who in their insatiable urge for domination would readily betray an ally and swindle a non-Jew; who tampered with the Holy Scriptures, spurned God's divine message, and persecuted His messenger Muhammad just as they had done to previous prophets, including Jesus of Nazareth. For this perfidy, they will incur a string of retributions, both in the afterlife, when they will burn in hell, and here on earth where they have been justly condemned to an existence of wretchedness and humiliation.

As this summary suggests, the traits associated with Jews make a paradoxical mixture: they are seen as both domineering and wretched, both haughty and low. But such is the age-old Muslim stereotype—as it is, mutatis mutandis, the Christian. Coming to know Jews as a small subject community in their midst, most Muslims held them in the contempt reserved for the powerless. "I never saw the curse denounced against the children of Israel more fully brought to bear than in the East," wrote an early-19th-century Western traveler to the Ottoman empire, "where they are considered rather as a link between animals and human beings than as men possessed by the same attributes." To another contemporary visitor to the region, the Jews' "pusillanimity is so excessive, that they flee before the uplifted hand of a child." That was one side of the picture. As for the other, even Egypt's President Sadat, the man who would go farther than any other Middle Eastern leader in accepting the existence of a sovereign Jewish state, could remind his people in April 1972 of why the Jews had to have been brought so low, and why their power was still to be feared:

> They were the neighbors of the Prophet in Medina. They were his neighbors, and he negotiated with them and reached an agreement with them. But in the end they proved that they were men of deceit and treachery, since they concluded a treaty with his enemies, so as to strike him in Medina and attack him from within. . . . They are a nation of traitors and liars, contrivers of plots, a people born for deeds of treachery.

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Given the depth of anti-Jewish feeling in the Arab Middle East, it is hardly surprising that some of the hoariest and most bizarre themes of European anti-Semitism should have struck a responsive chord when they made their way there over the course of the centuries. Thus, special derision is reserved in Arab writings (as in Christian ones) for the biblical notion of the chosen people, seen in Anis Mansur's words as the quintessence of "Judaism's perception of the Jews as . . . masters of the universe—its peoples, lands, and skies . . . to whom all other peoples are but servants, undeserving of belief in the Jewish God." To this doctrine is attributed, in turn, the license Jews supposedly take in mistreating non-Jews, with the Talmud characterized as not only condoning but actually requiring acts like the swindling of Gentiles and the "rape of women of other religions."

Then there is the "blood libel," that medieval Christian fabrication according to which Jews use Gentile blood, and particularly the blood of children, for ritual purposes. Imported to the Ottoman empire by Christians in the 15th century, this fantastical charge acquired a mythic status, reaching a peak of popularity in the 19th century. Among the numerous places in which the libel surfaced, and local Jews were made to suffer for it, were Aleppo (1810, 1850, 1875); Antioch (1826); Beirut (1824, 1862, 1874); Damascus (1840, 1848, 1890); Deir al-Qamar (1847); Homs (1829); Tripoli (1834); Jerusalem (1847); Alexandria (1870, 1882, 1901-1902); Port Said (1903, 1908); and Cairo (1844, 1890, 1901-1902).

Although most of these incidents were of Christian manufacture, and although Ottoman authorities often extended help to the persecuted Jews, the libel itself was quickly internalized in the Muslim imagination, where it remains firmly implanted to this day. Thus, in August 1972 King Faisal of Saudi Arabia could confide to the mass-circulation Egyptian magazine *al-Musawwar* that "while I was in Paris on a visit, the police discovered five murdered children. Their blood had been drained, and it turned out that some Jews had murdered them in order to take their blood and mix it with the bread that they eat on that day."

Nor is the blood libel kept alive only by avowed anti-Semites (like King Faisal). Rather, it is prevalent even among scholars and intellectuals. In *Israeli Religious Thought: Stages and Sects*, published by a respectable Egyptian academic press, Dr. Hasan Zaza, a professor of Hebrew at Ein Shams University in Cairo, accepts the veracity of the blood libel despite his awareness that Jewish religious law specifically forbids the eating of anything containing blood. For how is it possible, he asks rhetorically, that a charge that has been leveled time and again all over the world for so many generations could be just an unsubstantiated rumor?

PERHAPS THE most successful anti-Semitic import of all in the Muslim-Arab world is the theory of an organized Jewish conspiracy to achieve world domination, particularly as spelled out in the notorious *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. This virulent anti-Semitic tract, which was fabricated by the Russian secret police at the turn of the 20th century, made its appearance in Western Europe during and immediately after World War I. As early as 1918, Chaim Weizmann, traveling in Palestine with the Zionist Commission, was reportedly presented with copies of the *Protocols* by his Arab interlocutors. Translated into Arabic in the mid-1920's, the work has retained its popular appeal to this day, published in numerous editions and in several different translations, including one by the brother of Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser. (Nasser himself would recommend the pamphlet as a useful guide to the "Jewish mind," as would his successor Anwar Sadat, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, and Muammar Qaddafi of Libya, among many others.)

As with the blood libel, the astounding popularity of the *Protocols* is directly related to the millennial disparagement of Jews as treacherous and grasping. According to one venerable strand of Muslim-Arab thought on this subject, what lies behind the supremacist concept of the chosen people is, in fact, a perverse inferiority complex that dates back to biblical times. When the ancient Jewish kingdoms were destroyed, this inferiority complex was transmogrified from a will to occupy neighboring lands into a determination to exert financial, economic, and political control *wherever* Jews lived—an objective that was in fact achieved in many Western countries. Modern Zionism could thus be seen as a reversion to the original form of this same impulse—the impulse, that is, to occupy foreign lands and subjugate their peoples, and to justify doing so by invoking biblical promises.

When, moreover, the Zionists managed to harness international support for their enterprise—in the form of the Balfour Declaration and an endorsement of its pledges by the League of Nations—they utilized (so the argument runs) the same foul methods used against the Prophet Muhammad and other victims of ancient Jewish aggression. "We have known the Jews to be most

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tyrannical and despotic," the Jaffa Muslim-Christian Society complained in May 1920 to the district's British military governor, reminding him

> of the deeds perpetrated by their forefathers; of the persecution and ill-treatment they meted out to their contemporaries; of what they did to Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them); [and] of what they had been meditating toward the Muslim and Christian nations.

During the 1920's and the 1930's, these and other traditional Islamic perceptions coalesced with themes articulated in the *Protocols* to create a distinctly Middle Eastern version of the theory of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy. Thus, the prominent Palestinian educator Khalil Sakakini, an Orthodox Christian fully conversant with the surrounding Muslim society, could equate the Zionist enterprise with the crucifixion of Jesus—and also float the newer stereotype of Jewish domination of the great powers, whether the Romans at the time of Jesus or, now, the British. "There is little doubt that the British government is [morally and politically] bankrupt," Sakakini wrote in the 1930's. "Who can have high regard for a government which is totally under the Jewish sway, like a slave?" And, on another occasion: "Isn't there a single European country loathing to be an instrument in Jewish hands?"

Similarly, the Palestinian politician Rashid Hajj Ibrahim warned in the late 1940's that Jewish ambitions ran well beyond Palestine to encompass the entire Middle East. "The Jews covet Egypt," he argued,

> because this is Moses' place of origin; they desire Syria and Lebanon—because their Temple was built from Lebanon's cedars; they have set their sights both on Iraq, the birthplace of Abraham the Patriarch, and the Hijaz—Ishmael's birthplace; and they want to have Transjordan because it is a part of Palestine and used to be a part of Solomon's kingdom.

Muhammad Nimr al-Khatib, who wrote an account of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, ascribed the Arabs' defeat in that conflict to their failure to recognize that Jews now exercised worldwide dominion. "The old generation perceived the Jews . . . as a cowardly, avaricious, and submissive group which we could easily throw into the sea," he lamented, but in the modern era the Arabs face an organized evil with tentacles all over the world. "We are not fighting the Jews you know," he went on, but rather "the powers that defeated Hitler and Japan; we are fighting world Zionism, which exploits Truman, enslaves Churchill and Attlee, and dominates London, New York, and Washington."

Forty years later, in 1988, Syrian president Hafez al-Assad would express the same sentiment in no less explicit terms:

> The ambitions of racist Zionism are as clear as the sun. . . . They do not want Palestine alone or a piece of land here or there. They do not want only another Arab country. They want . . . to impose their hegemony beyond that until it covers the entire world.

HAVE THERE been any signs of a diminishment of Arab anti-Semitism as, in the last decade, Israel and its Arab neighbors have ostensibly drawn closer? None whatsoever. Quite to the contrary: Egypt, at peace with Israel for over two decades, may be, today, the world's most prolific producer of anti-Semitic ideas and attitudes. These ideas and attitudes are voiced openly by the extreme Islamist press, by the establishment media, and even by supporters of peace with Israel like Anis Mansur. In numberless articles, scholarly writings, books, cartoons, and public statements, Jews are painted in the blackest terms imaginable.

The traditional blood libel is still in wide circulation in today's Egypt, together with a string of other canards whose tenor may be glimpsed in the title of an 1890 tract recently reprinted by, of all sources, the Egyptian ministry of education: *Human Sacrifice in the Talmud*. Jews have been accused of everything from exporting infected seeds, plants, and cattle in order to destroy Egyptian agriculture, to corrupting Egyptian society through the spread of venereal diseases and the distribution of drugs. Similarly popular are the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which may be in wider distribution in Egypt than anywhere else in the world. In *Protocols* fashion, the hand of "world Jewry" is seen behind everything from the destruction of Russian society to the downfall of former German chancellor Helmut Kohl to the control of world public opinion through the film industry. "We cannot watch a single American movie that does not include dialogue commending the Jews and their beliefs," complains Muhammad Abd al-Mun'im, chief editor of the weekly *Ruz al-Yussef*. "They have transgressed their limits and reached the point of saying that they are superman-creatures and the best to be born on this planet from all of history."

Other Arab parties engaged in negotiations with Israel have done their best to keep up with Egypt's example. In Syria, whose late president supposedly made "a strategic choice" for peace in the mid-

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1990's, anti-Semitism remains an integral part of political and intellectual discourse. Particularly favored in Syria is Holocaust denial, another staple of Arab anti-Semitism that is sometimes coupled with overt sympathy for Nazi Germany. Only a few months ago, just as Syrian and Israeli leaders were about to meet in Washington for crucial talks, the official newspaper *Tishrin* published an article by its editor denying the murder of six million Jews by the Nazis.

The same can be said of Yasir Arafat and his Palestinian Authority (PA). Indeed, the seemingly sudden and spontaneous outburst of naked racial and religious hatred since early October of this year is perfectly in line with the PA's systematic effort—flagrantly violating its obligations under Oslo—to instill in its people, and particularly in its young people, an ineradicable enmity not only for the state of Israel but for Jews and Judaism.

As part of this effort, Palestinians have been informed of the most outlandish Jewish plots to corrupt and ruin them—outlandish, but wholly congruent with the medieval myth of Jews as secret destroyers and poisoners of wells. Thus, the PA minister of health, Riad al-Za'anun, has charged Israeli doctors with using "Palestinian patients for experimental medicines," while the Palestinian representative to the Human Rights Commission in Geneva accused them of injecting Palestinian children with the AIDS virus. For his part, the PA minister of ecology, Yusuf Abu Safiyyah, indicted Israel for "dumping liquid waste . . . in Palestinian areas in the West Bank and Gaza"—a charge famously amplified by Suha Arafat when, in the presence of Hillary Clinton, she told an attentive audience in Gaza in November 1999 that "our people have been subjected to the daily and extensive use of poisonous gas by the Israeli forces, which has led to an increase in cancer cases among women and children."

In their schoolbooks, Palestinian children learn about an evil Jewish persona, traceable to biblical times, which accounts for the worldwide persecution of the Jews through the ages. They are indoctrinated with the idea that Jews are, and always have been, implacable enemies of Islam, people who "called Muhammad a liar and denied him, [who] fought against his religion in all ways and by all means, a war that has not yet ended until today." The Bible and the Talmud come in for special abuse as the principal sources of Jewish moral depravity, the Bible being "full of texts that support the Jews' tendency to racial and religious zealotry" and the Talmud a racist treatise obliging the Jews to seclude themselves from others even as they infiltrate and ruin the societies in which they live. As one such textbook, *The New History of the Arabs and the World*, puts it, fabricating a talmudic passage out of whole cloth and with malignant inventiveness:

> It is said in the Talmud: "We [the Jews] are God's people on earth. . . . [God] forced upon the human animal and upon all nations and races that they serve us, and He spread us through the world to ride on them and hold their reins. We must marry our beautiful daughters with kings, ministers, and lords and enter our sons into the various religions, for thus we will have the final word in managing the countries. We should cheat [non-Jews] and arouse quarrels among them, then they will fight each other. . . . Non-Jews are pigs who God created in the shape of man in order that they be fit for service for the Jews, and God created the world for [the Jews]."

What then of the future? On occasion, it is true, Arab anti-Semitism has coexisted with or even led to a desire to reach an accommodation with the Jews. King Abdallah Ibn Hussein, founder of the Hashemite kingdom of Transjordan and the grandfather of Jordan's late King Hussein, was keen to incorporate the Jewish community in Palestine into his realm, precisely in order to benefit from the Jews' (perceived) worldwide political influence. Anwar Sadat's anti-Jewish prejudice did not prevent him from signing the first-ever Arab peace treaty with Israel.

In most instances, however, Arab anti-Semitism has served rather to exacerbate distrust and hatred of Israel, thus rendering the possibility of real reconciliation ever more remote. The smallest incident can suffice to pierce the thin veneer of official "anti-Zionism," resulting in a torrent of abuse directed not just against Israel and its leaders but against Jews pure and simple—a people, in the words of the Egyptian government daily *al-Akhbar*, who "should not be trusted because they are a nation of vagabonds filled with hatred toward the entire world."

That such reprehensible lies, and much worse, can appear in the official newspaper of a government at peace with Israel for two decades suggests how deeply anti-Semitic bigotry is entrenched in Arab societies. Whatever happens in the specific conflict between Palestinian Arabs and Israel in the coming days and months, for the foreseeable future Muslim-Arab lands seem destined to remain the only regions in today's world where anti-Semitism—*not* anti-Zionism—still constitutes state policy. And these are the "partners" with whom Israel is now expected to forge a lasting peace.

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Proust's Way

Algis Valiunas

AMONG THE great modern artists, some seem to possess a boundless vitality, a spiritual extravagance that, even in the face of life's hot suffering, causes them to profess their gratitude for the very fact of existence and to pour forth their praise of nobility, goodness, beauty, fortitude, love. Goethe, Beethoven, Victor Hugo, and Tolstoy are perhaps the foremost such figures.

Admirers of Wagner might place him, too, among the life-enhancers; yet he could write, at the age of thirty-nine, "I lead *an indescribably worthless life*. . . [F]or me, enjoyment, *love* are imaginary, not experienced." Flaubert, who consecrated himself to a prose so beautiful that no real life could touch it, found himself exclaiming with envy at the sight of a bourgeois family enjoying a picnic, "They have it right." In bitterness of heart, Kafka let loose with "I am made of literature," meaning he was unfit for life.

And then there is the case of Marcel Proust (1871-1922), whose 3,000-page novel *À la recherche du temps perdu* (*In Search of Lost Time*) outshines the masterworks of Wagner, Flaubert, and Kafka but whose life makes theirs look unattainably bold and merry by comparison. Proust may have been the greatest novelist of the 20th century, but he is almost singlehandedly responsible for turning the term "exquisite sensibility" into a jeer. Everyone knows about the madeleine that Proust's narrator, Marcel, dunks in his tea, triggering a monumental reflux of childhood memories; the asthma that hounded Proust to an early death; the silent, cork-lined room that he rarely left. Speaking to William F. Buckley, Jr. at the height of the cold war, a prominent European intellectual upheld the honor of European manhood by declaring, "We're not all a bunch of little Prousts over there."

Sickly, homosexual, addicted to the social whirl, the real-life Proust seemed, to his contemporaries, irreparably frivolous, terminally brittle. Everyone recognized his brilliance, but no one thought he would forge anything lasting out of it. An 1893 portrait by Jacques-Émile Blanche, who was to make his reputation by painting artistic eminences, depicts Proust as a ludicrous dandy in wing collar and cravat. His forehead has a greenish cast, like a week-old bruise, while the rest of his face is waxen. The flower on his lapel, which picks up his facial coloring, bears a disturbing resemblance to an outsized malign insect. The eyes, though large and alert, do not reveal anything remarkable behind them. There is nothing to indicate that this young man might be more than a fop smitten with his own elegance. The only hint of otherworldliness is in the morbid tints of his face, which suggest that life is already beginning to prove too much for him and that his days are numbered.

To be sure, modern art has made room for, has even become the preserve of, wayward and mis-

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shapen souls. In 1918, with his masterpiece largely finished, Proust himself wrote that contemporary reality yielded its subtlest favors to the debauched and the incurable, and (referring to certain 19th-century artists) that "an unknown part of the mind or an additional nuance of affection was bursting with all the drunkenness of a Musset or a Verlaine, with all the perversions of a Baudelaire or a Rimbaud, even a Wagner, with the epilepsy of a Flaubert." Suffering has its perquisites, and Proust took them for everything he could.

Yet he was also to prove himself a titan. Two identically titled new biographies help us see how, from unprepossessing beginnings, he did it. Both William C. Carter's *Marcel Proust: A Life** and Jean-Yves Tadié's *Marcel Proust: A Life*† provide moving and cogent accounts of a life that ultimately had a single raison d'être.

The two books differ somewhat in approach. Carter, a professor of French at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, is more considerate to the American reader, deftly filling in the social and political background of Proust's life and work—as in the case of the Dreyfus affair, which figures so prominently in Proust's novel. Tadié, who teaches at the Sorbonne in Paris and is widely acknowledged as the world's leading authority on Proust, takes it for granted that his reader knows things that most Americans do not. His book, which appeared in France in 1996 and which Carter cites repeatedly and respectfully, is the superior work of scholarship, but it is studded with impedimenta that sometimes make for tough going. (Tadié will record who wrote a review in a certain newspaper on a given day, for instance, but not what the review said, or set down the guest lists for parties that Proust attended, without a clue as to who these people were.) Still, there is much that Tadié knows that one is grateful to have between the covers of a book, and taken together Carter and Tadié constitute a treasure trove.

MARCEL PROUST was the son of Adrien Proust, an eminent Parisian doctor, and his wife, born Jeanne Weil. The father was Catholic and the mother Jewish. Although she herself refused to convert, Jeanne agreed that their children would be raised as Catholics. As it happened, however, neither parent practiced his faith and, once Marcel had made his first communion, his church-going days were pretty much over.

Jewish religious law holds that the child of a Jewish mother is a Jew, but Proust never considered himself one, and neither did his friends. Still, his parentage occasionally presented difficulties. Once, as a young man, he stood silent and unresponsive when a revered mentor, Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac, delivered an anti-Semitic tirade in the company of friends and then asked Proust for his opinion on the 1894 conviction of Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a Jew, who had been tried for treason on the charge of selling military secrets to the Germans. The next day, Proust wrote to Montesquiou that he had not said anything because, although he himself was Catholic like his father and brother, his mother was Jewish: "I am sure you understand that this is reason enough for me to refrain from such discussions."

Whether Proust's private frankness made up for his public reticence is a vexing question, and all the more so because he went on to confide that he was "not free to have the ideas I might otherwise have on the subject." Proust's tacit fear, in other words, was that if he defended the Jews he would be taken for a Jew, and what he wanted above all was to be thought of as a Christian gentleman. He even seemed to leave open the possibility that Montesquiou might be right: that only filial piety forbade him from thinking as Montesquiou did. In Carter's view, "Proust stated his position and his independence, but he might have been less ambiguous about the ethical implications of racist remarks." Carter is too kind. Proust was only as forthright as his social cowardice—his fear of sacrificing his respectability—would allow.

He was to find his courage when events made it easier to be courageous. By 1898, more and more people had become convinced that Dreyfus had been railroaded, and an uproar ensued that was to shake French society for years. The salon of Mme. Geneviève Straus (the widow of the composer Georges Bizet), where Proust had been a habitué for several years, turned into a Dreyfusard hotbed. Old friends of the anti-Dreyfus persuasion, including the painter Edgar Degas, stalked off and never came back. Drawing strength from those around him, Proust now joined in the growing drumbeat for a retrial that was led by the novelist Emile Zola. He was even to boast that he was the first of the Dreyfusards, because he secured the signature of his literary hero Anatole France on a petition. Still, when an anti-Semitic newspaper numbered him among the "young Jews" who defied decency and right thinking, Proust, who at first thought to correct the paper's misapprehension, decided to keep quiet, lest he draw any more attention to himself.

* Yale University Press, 960 pp., $35.00.

† Translated by Evan Cameron. Viking, 934 pp., $45.00.

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He must have known that, in the eyes of anti-Dreyfusards, his political affiliations only served to confirm the sad fact of his birth.

IF THE Dreyfus affair exposed the moral cretinism that extended into the upper echelons of French society, this hardly deterred Proust from wanting a place in that world. His social career had begun during his last year of high school, when, thanks to the mothers of some of his school friends, he gained admission to certain exclusive Parisian salons. His chum Jacques Bizet, whom he had tried to seduce, without success, made it up to him by serving as his ticket to the beau monde. At the salon of Mme. Straus, young Bizet's mother, Proust became acquainted with artistic and aristocratic grandees like the composer Gabriel Fauré, the writer Guy de Maupassant, the actress Sarah Bernhardt, and Princesse Mathilde, the niece of Napoleon I. In time he became a regular at Princesse Mathilde's as well, where the old-line nobility rubbed shoulders with arrivistes, and distinguished Jews mingled with those who detested them. (The writer Léon Daudet, to whom Proust would dedicate a volume of his novel, confided to his diary after one party: "The imperial dwelling was infested with Jews and Jewesses.")

Another hostess conquered by the high-flying young Proust was Mme. Madeleine Lemaire, renowned for her musical gatherings. It was she who introduced him to Montesquiou-Fezensac, the aristocratic poet whose opinions on Jews Proust was willing to overlook for the sake of the Count's artistic and social cachet. And there was something else: Montesquiou was boldly aboveboard about his homosexuality, at a time when, as Carter writes, "few Frenchmen dared, if they cared for their reputation and social standing, to display amorous affection for another man." This frankness earned Proust's regard—although he was, of course, ambivalent about going public on the issue of his own sexual nature.

Not that it was any secret to those who knew him. In high school, Proust had laid elaborate sexual siege to friends, writing them letters fraught with passion. When his disposition became apparent to his father, in the name of decency the agitated Dr. Proust slipped the boy ten francs and sent him off to a (female) prostitute; the mission wound up a fiasco when Proust broke a chamber pot and spoiled the romance of the moment.

Such happiness as Proust had from love was not made to last. Probably his first consummated affair was with the composer Reynaldo Hahn, whom he met at Mme. Lemaire's when he was twenty-two and Hahn nineteen. Raw nerves and ceaseless importunity characterized Proust's love for Hahn, who quickly tired of his friend's demanding antics. But it was really Proust who fell out of love first, as he fell *in* love with the stripling Lucien Daudet, son of the novelist Alphonse Daudet and brother of the venomous Léon. Proust would even fight a duel with a journalist, himself homosexual, who hinted salaciously in print that his friendship with Lucien was not quite respectable; both duelists fired and missed.

Proust had good reason to keep his intimate proclivities under wraps. But biographers have their job to do, and Carter and Tadié leave little unsaid. Both record his favored mode of sexual recreation: going to a homosexual brothel and masturbating while watching as the man he had hired masturbated in front of him. If this procedure failed of its effect, the obliging prostitute would bring in a pair of hungry rats and loose them on each other, a spectacle that would invariably afford Proust the needed relief. (For this information we have the testimony both of one such prostitute and of the writer André Gide, in whom Proust confided.)

To the innocent observer, Proust's sexual preferences may well appear about as demented as such things get; but normality of any kind was never Proust's strong suit. Abysmal health plagued him his life long, and he cultivated the perpetual invalid's peculiarities. Wracked by asthma, he spent six hours a day burning eucalyptus powders and inhaling the fumes. He needed veronal and opium and morphine to sleep, caffeine to revive him and also to help his asthma. The huge doses he took of caffeine brought on angina; the sedatives and painkillers destroyed his ability to register temperature, so that on sweltering days he would wear a heavy coat. A year's supply of medications cost him the equivalent of $20,000 in today's money. (His parents left him an inheritance of some $4.6 million, so the expenses were not insupportable.)

FROM HIS early twenties, Proust kept vampire's hours, sleeping during the day and venturing abroad only under cover of darkness. As he grew older and sicker, he ventured out less and less. His cork-lined room became his refuge. Illness, he wrote to a friend, had made it necessary for him "to do without nearly everything and to replace people by their images and life by thought." He subscribed to a device called the theatrophone, over which he could hear live operatic and dramatic performances without leaving his bed. He hired the best string quartet in Paris to play just for him in the middle

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of the night. In his latter days, he subsisted largely on ice cream and iced beer, ordered from the Ritz.

And through the worst of his misery, when it was almost impossible to eat, sleep, or breathe, he worked. From his youth he had wanted to be a writer, but the full seriousness of his vocation did not impress itself upon him until he was well into his thirties. His first book, *Plaisirs et Jours* (*Pleasures and Days*), a collection of stories, poems, and pastiches, had appeared when he was twenty-three and was generally dismissed as a fussy curiosity. Fuming at the critics' condescension, Proust set to work on a vast autobiographical novel, *Jean Santeuil*, which he abandoned after five years and a thousand pages. He translated a volume of John Ruskin, the English art and social critic; produced essays of his own on such artists as Watteau, Chardin, Rembrandt, Moreau, and Monet; and worked abortively on another novel that converged with a study of the literary critic Sainte-Beuve.

His painful failures made for an invaluable apprenticeship. Though the record is hazy, it was perhaps in 1908 that Proust conceived the work for which he would be known; by the next year, the novel was well under way. Carter says that by 1916 or soon thereafter, Proust "gave his book its ultimate shape if not its final dimensions," but his tugging and worrying at the manuscript would continue to his final days. *À la recherche du temps perdu* appeared in eight volumes, published between 1913 and 1927, the last four posthumously. The titles of the constituent parts are *Du côté de chez Swann* (*Swann's Way*), *À l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleur* (*In the Shade of the Young Girls in Flower*), *Le côté de Guermantes* (*The Guermantes Way*), *Sodome et Gomorrhe* (*Sodom and Gomorrah*), *La prisonnière* (*The Captive*), *Albertine disparue* (*Albertine Gone*), and *Le temps retrouvé* (*Time Regained*).*

PROUST'S NOVEL takes as its great themes the illusions and disappointments of love, friendship, and society (in the limited sense of that word), and the joyous satisfactions of art. The book opens with the narrator's reminiscence—his name is Marcel, although one has to read over 2,000 pages to find that out—of lying in bed as a boy and waiting for his mother's good-night kiss; proceeds to a recollection of youthful days in the countrified Parisian suburb of Combray; then goes back to a time before Marcel was born and portrays the agonizing love of Monsieur Swann, an old friend of the family, for the courtesan Odette de Crécy.

Most of the rest of the book has to do with Marcel's being in love, seeing others in love, and going to parties. His first romance, physically quite innocent but emotionally flaying, is with the Swanns' daughter, Gilberte. (Unlike his creator, Marcel is heterosexual.) Next comes Albertine, whom Marcel singles out from a fascinating crowd of rowdy girls in the seaside resort of Balbec; this love is not innocent and is even more destructive. Meanwhile Marcel becomes friendly with the Duchesse de Guermantes, who embodies a social grandeur that sets him dreaming; gets to know the novelist Bergotte and the painter Elstir, who provide lessons in what art can and cannot do; mixes with the Verdurins, a couple of distasteful bourgeois climbers, and their circle of fools; and is courted in a most unnerving fashion by the Baron de Charlus, lord prince of the sodomites. Interleaved throughout are meditations and conversations on actual and imagined works of art, ladies' fashions, etymology, military strategy, homosexuality, anti-Semitism, social transformations, time, and timelessness.

For most of the novel, finally, Marcel is a writer manqué, an aspirant who lacks the understanding to conceive a novel and the will to see it through. The book then records the process by which he *becomes* the writer who has written the extraordinary work one is reading. "And thus," he concludes, "my whole life up to the present day might and yet might not have been summed up under the title: A Vocation."

What does that "vocation" reveal? No other writer/narrator has attended with such extravagant care to the surface of things: the grace or ungainliness of a gesture, the historical associations of a great name, the import of a gravely formal bow in response to a friendly greeting, the radiance of a distinguished smile or shirtfront, party talk that goes on for miles. Yet, although the charms of love, friendship, and society present a brilliant and beguiling surface, they never please Marcel for long. Real life is to be found elsewhere, and only the rare soul manages to find it.

For Marcel, there is no desire more imperious than the desire to know. It is the motive force of his life and of his relentless pursuit of what he calls reality. The words "real" and "reality" must recur a thousand times in this novel, being signposts—like "virtue" for Machiavelli, "happiness" for Tolstoy, or "good" for Hemingway—that lead the reader to the

* The first English translation of the novel (1922-1931), by C.K. Scott-Moncrieff, is justly renowned; F. Scott Fitzgerald called it "a masterpiece in itself." Revised by Terence Kilmartin (1982), it is still available under the title *Remembrance of Things Past*, and this is the translation I will be referring to (Vintage paperback). D.J. Enright's further revision of this version bears the more accurate title *In Search of Lost Time* (Modern Library). Penguin Books promises yet another translation due out next year.

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heart of its unfolding significance. But to disclose the reality at life's core requires one to experience illusion, in all its manifold and obdurate guises, and this experience is Marcel's meat and drink.

Nowhere in Proust's world are illusion's guises harder to penetrate than when it comes to sex and love. The Proustian lover typically ascribes to the object of his desire all manner of enchanting virtues, which generally have no basis in fact, and then torments himself with a plague of suspected vices, which as a rule prove only too real. Every conceivable infidelity must be envisioned in gross detail, since as long as one is in love one can never assure oneself of the reality of the beloved's heart. This ignorance is torture—but knowledge brings an end to love itself. Even carnal knowledge is no knowledge at all, only an initiation into the pangs of uncertainty.

In the early stages of Swann's love for Odette, he believes he knows her better than anyone else does; the rumors he has heard that she is an elegant whore who has been kept by a number of men cannot be true, for she is incomparably sensitive and kind and good. In time he finds out otherwise. But even when Swann falls out of love, he cannot be indifferent to Odette unless he continues to possess her; his only recourse is to marry this woman whom he knows to be a slut.

Marcel emulates Swann in his need—ruinous to a lover, exceedingly useful to an aspiring writer—to know everything about the woman he loves, especially the worst. Albertine's fishy answers to some pointed questions about a sexually charged encounter she has had with Gilberte (Swann's daughter and Marcel's first love) set the young man's mental wheels turning. Once the lever is tripped and the questions begin, there is no stopping them. Jealous obsession is a perpetual-motion machine; it will quit its savage taunting only when love is smashed to pieces, and maybe not even then.

As it happens—as it always happens in Proust—Marcel's worst imaginings turn out to be true: tireless researches and numberless rounds of cat and mouse confirm that Albertine is a lesbian. When she leaves him and is killed in a riding accident, Marcel is grief-stricken; but in due course his tender memories give way to renewed jealousy, a jealousy "stamped with the character, at once tormenting and solemn, of puzzles left forever insoluble by the death of the one person who could have explained them."

THEN THERE is the case of the Baron de Charlus, who chats with the young man at a party and invites him up to his place afterward. This nobleman, whom Marcel has heard spoken of as the lover of Mme. Swann, is a caricature of virility, swaggering like a preening cock and proclaiming his disgust with the effeminacy of modern youth. He intimates to Marcel that he might be interested in taking him under his protection and bestowing upon him the untold benefits of his exalted position, his peerless taste, his unrivaled knowledge of the world. But when they next meet, Charlus is outraged at the young man's ignorance, presumption, and cloddishness. Their friendship is finished before it ever really gets started.

The next sighting clarifies matters: Marcel spies Charlus in the courtyard of the Guermantes mansion—Charlus belongs to that venerable family—evidently bemused by the look of a tailor named Jupien who has a shop there. After a wordless mating dance, the two men withdraw to Jupien's shop, where they have at it with vociferous gusto. The noise they make—Marcel can hear but cannot see them—sounds as though one might be slitting the other's throat, so close are the groans of pleasure to those of pain. Once the indispensable facts are known, everything else falls into place. Charlus is in love with an ideal manliness because he is, in the crucial respect, a woman.

The long meditation on homosexuality that follows this episode is often taken to be Proust's definitive word on the subject. Some passages are certainly heartfelt and magniloquent: "a race upon which a curse is laid and which must live in falsehood and perjury because it knows that its desire, that which constitutes life's dearest pleasure, is held to be punishable, shameful, an inadmissible thing." Marcel is even capable of attributing to sexual collisions like Charlus's and Jupien's a kind of sublime necessity:

> [T]his Romeo and this Juliet may believe with good reason that their love is not a momentary whim but a true predestination, determined by the harmonies of their temperaments, and not only by their own personal temperaments but by those of their ancestors, by their most distant strains of heredity, so much so that the fellow creature who is conjoined with them has belonged to them from before their birth, has attracted them by a force comparable to that which governs the worlds on which we spent our former lives.

But as Marcel comes to know more and more about Charlus, his frothy enthusiasm turns to disgust and horror. At the funeral of Charlus's wife, whom Charlus has spoken of as the most noble and beautiful person he had ever known, the Baron tries to pick up an altar boy. When World War I

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depletes the supply of eligible men, he takes to molesting children. He bankrolls a male brothel, of which Jupien becomes the innkeeper. There Marcel, who has wandered in innocently one night, sees Charlus chained to a bed and beaten with a whip studded with nails, afterward protesting to Jupien that his torturer was not "sufficiently brutal." When Charlus leaves, Jupien boasts to Marcel that his establishment has the toniest, most cultivated clientele. Marcel replies that it is "worse than a madhouse, since the mad fancies of the lunatics who inhabit it are played out as actual, visible drama—it is a veritable pandemonium."

Normality, decency, goodness are, in short, the rarest of commodities in Proust's world. Nor does their scarcity make them prized, except in the eyes of Marcel and a few other uncharacteristic souls. Instead, decency is seen by most as a social handicap; the Verdurins' circle of bourgeois snobs, for example, barely tolerates a stammering, clumsy paleographer named Saniette. Monsieur Verdurin's mockery of Saniette's speech impediment makes "the faithful burst out laughing, looking like a group of cannibals in whom the sight of a wounded white man has aroused the thirst for blood." And nowhere is this savage tribalism more marked than in the antipathy that those who consider themselves true Frenchmen feel for Jews.

Anti-Semitism is everywhere in Proust's novel. Perhaps the most repellent instance occurs when the madam of a cheap brothel Marcel is visiting touts the exotic richness of the prostitute Rachel's flesh: "And with an inane affectation of excitement which she hoped would prove contagious, and which ended in a hoarse gurgle, almost of sensual satisfaction: 'Think of that, my boy, a Jewess! Wouldn't that be thrilling? Rrrr!'"

Those in the highest reaches of society share the sentiments of the lowest. Thus, Charlus is given to maniacal explosions of loathing for Jews, while the Prince de Guermantes, Swann tells Marcel, hates Jews so much that, when a wing of his castle caught fire, he let it burn to the ground rather than send for fire extinguishers to the house next door, which happened to be the Rothschilds'. Swann is himself one of the rare Jews allowed entrance to the highest society, which leads to the outrage of the Duc de Guermantes when Swann, who had always impressed him as a Jew of the right sort, "an honorable Jew," turns out to be an outspoken Dreyfusard.

As in its sentiments toward Jews, so in every other way, the social world in Proust is revealed as a "realm of nullity." Any glimmer of moral discrimination, let alone of true understanding, shines like a beacon; for the most part, darkness prevails. In the famous closing scene of *The Guermantes Way*, the duke and duchess, on their way to a dinner party, are bidding good evening to Swann and Marcel. The duchess inquires whether Swann will join them on a trip to Italy ten months hence; Swann replies that he is mortally ill and will be dead by then. The duchess does not know how to respond: "placed for the first time in her life between two duties as incompatible as getting into her carriage to go out to dinner and showing compassion for a man who was about to die, she could find nothing in the code of conventions that indicated the right line to follow."

With his "instinctive politeness," Swann senses the duchess's discomfort and says he must not detain them: "he knew that for other people their own social obligations took precedence over the death of a friend." And yet, although the duke and duchess do not have a moment to spare to comfort their dying friend, they nevertheless do delay their departure while the duchess, who is wearing black shoes with her red dress, changes at her husband's insistence into a more suitable pair of red shoes.

This portrait of gross moral insensibility in the face of death is comedy of manners at its most scathing, perhaps even overdone: the duke complains that his wife is dead-tired, and that he is dying of hunger. The indignant Marcel rewards the stupidity of these preposterous creatures with unforgettable strokes of cold fury. On another distressing occasion, a doctor preoccupied with his social calendar pronounces casually that Marcel's grandmother is dying, and Marcel observes, "Each of us is indeed alone." One has friends and lovers and family, one mixes in the best society, but finally one has no intimates. Death comes for us strictly one by one—a thought hardly to be borne.

Marcel's triumph is that he does find a way to bear it, indeed to overcome it. In *Time Regained*, after spending years in a sanatorium, he is on his way to a party hosted by the Duchesse de Guermantes. The previous day he had experienced what he thought was his final disillusionment with the life of literature, but as he enters the courtyard of the Guermantes mansion a revelatory sensation changes his life. A car nearly hits him, and when he steps back out of its way he places his foot on a paving stone that is slightly lower than the one next to it; this unevenness underfoot fills him with an inexplicable and extraordinary joy.

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Rocking back and forth on the irregular pavement, Marcel remembers standing on two uneven stones in the baptistery of St. Mark's in Venice, and all the various sensations associated with that particular moment come flooding back. Similar marvels await him when he enters the Guermantes house and, twice more, involuntary memories overwhelm him in their glory. He is supremely happy, but cannot at first explain it. Why should this sudden efflorescence of memory have "given me a joy which . . . sufficed, without any other proof, to make death a matter of indifference"? He concludes that such episodes of transfiguring lucidity, for as long as they last, annihilate time, and are the most that a living man will know of eternity.

But just when he believes himself certain of the ultimate reality of timelessness, he is reminded sharply that time, too, is undeniably real. The party to which he is presently admitted strikes him, at first, as a masquerade, where everyone has been made up to look old. But the truth is that everyone looks old because everyone *is* old. Marcel has been away a long time, and time has done its work. Withered, sagging, shuffling, sputtering, wheezing, this assemblage of geezers and crones is the sad remnant of a company once distinguished for its beauty and vigor.

At last Marcel has penetrated the real world, and sees what he is supposed to do with his new knowledge: to write the book that one is reading. The awareness of time's passing spurs him to get down to the serious work that will offer him life's supreme pleasure: illuminating the nature of timelessness. "How happy would he be, I thought, the man who had the power to write such a book! What a task awaited him!"

LOVE, DEATH, society, art: Proust takes on the great themes. Does he do them justice?

Love as Proust writes about it is love as he experienced it: a neediness so desperate no possible response can satisfy it, a relentless harrying demand for complete possession, intensified by the perversity or promiscuity or unavailability of the beloved. What Proust knows of love he knows as almost no one else does. On jealousy—and the hatred and self-hatred it causes—he is an indisputable authority, who has perhaps only Shakespeare for a rival. But about love itself, Shakespeare knows a great deal else, while Proust has the specialist's habit of going on about his subject as though it were the only thing deserving attention. The effect is of moral lopsidedness and incompletion, as though Tolstoy had devoted the whole of *Anna Karenina* to Anna and Vronsky's wretched adultery without the counterweight of Levin and Kitty's triumphant love; such a novel could still be a great one, but something vital would be missing.

Complicating this picture of Proustian love is Marcel's attitude toward homosexuality. Although Proust enjoys cult status among homosexuals, the treatment of homosexuality in his great novel is, as we have seen, anything but purely admiring. André Gide, outspoken champion of homosexual freedom, chastised Proust, though only in private, for the disservice he did the cause: by taking an "impartial point of view," Gide said, Proust had "branded this subject with a red-hot iron that serves conventional morality far more effectively than the most emphatic moral treatises." (And Gide was commenting only on *Sodom and Gomorrah*; he had yet to read the brothel scene, which takes place in *Time Regained*.)

Gide later relented of his severity, after a conversation with Proust left him with the realization "that what we find ignoble, derisive, or disgusting [in his book] does not seem to him so repulsive." But can it really be that Proust intended the reader to see Marcel's revulsion at the scene in the male brothel as wrong, or as some sort of moral defect? Admittedly, there are passages (like the one quoted earlier) in which Marcel rises to an overt defense of homosexuality; and a rhetorical ploy he favors is to compare the plight of homosexuals to that of the Jews. Yet although Marcel may claim that the two conditions are morally comparable, he *shows* otherwise. If there is an unsavory Jew or two in the novel—the social-climbing writer Bloch, for instance—their peccadilloes do not approach the patent monstrosities of Charlus.

While Proust spends countless pages of fevered analysis on love, death gets only a few brief passages—but they are extraordinary. Marcel's most exacting criticism of society is that its forms do not accommodate the fact of mortality: the overriding concern with propriety turns the heart to stone, and the death of a friend or relative only gets in the way of those who go on living. His vision of human solitude in the face of death reminds one of Edvard Munch's great and dreadful painting *Grief*, in which a roomful of people are arrayed around the bed of a dead woman: no one touches or even looks at anyone else; each is locked in his own impenetrable sorrow, mourning by himself and, one suspects, for himself.

But unlike Munch, Proust does admit the possibility of consolation, even of redemption. The writer Bergotte dies while sitting in a museum and

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looking at a patch of yellow wall in a painting by his beloved Vermeer. This devotional attitude moves Marcel to think of "a different world, a world based on kindness, scrupulousness, self-sacrifice, a world entirely different from this one and which we leave in order to be born on this earth, before perhaps returning there. . . . So that the idea that Bergotte was not permanently dead is by no means improbable." It is this spiritual capaciousness that Saul Bellow's Mr. Sammler has in mind when he speaks of *In Search of Lost Time* as "a high-ceilinged masterpiece."

In the end, of course, there is only one sort of life that Proust believes to be worth living: the life of the artist. Neither bourgeois respectability nor aristocratic gaiety possesses any lasting hold on Marcel; both represent the unreal world he finds his way out of, and are of interest only insofar as they give him something to write about. But more towering artists than Proust have rendered ordinary lives with an imaginative sympathy that makes such lives extraordinary. Indeed, this imaginative sympathy, this sense that life holds out the possibility of fulfillment and happiness even for people who do not happen to be artists, is what makes both Goethe and Tolstoy greater writers than Proust.

As for those masters—Flaubert, Joyce, Wallace Stevens—who claim that art *is* the best thing life has to offer, none of them delivers so grandly as Proust. But here another irony needs to be registered. For what lives most memorably in his novel is not the "real" world of Marcel's highest aspirations but the "unreal" world, the world of thumbscrew love and puddinghead society; the timeless reality Marcel evokes seems dim indeed beside Charlus's bed of pain or the duchess's red shoes. A lifetime of hard suffering went into this masterpiece, and, for better and for worse, it is humanity in its heartache and failure that enjoys pride of place.

Whether Proust found the joy in the writing of his novel that Marcel professes to know is a question. The writing certainly took everything he had. His devoted housekeeper Céleste Albaret recalled that one night in the spring of 1922 Proust summoned her and declared, "I have important news. Tonight, I wrote the word 'end.' Now I can die." He did everything that he had it in him to do. That is a claim few can make.

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OBSERVATIONS

The Sex and Violence Show

Kay S. Hymowitz

WHEN, AT the height of the presidential campaign in September, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) released a report detailing the movie industry's efforts to attract children to its R-rated products, the reaction in Washington was not difficult to predict. Senator Joseph Lieberman, the Democratic vice-presidential nominee and a long-time scourge of Hollywood, vowed that, if elected, he and Al Gore would give movie-makers six months to "clean up their act" before devising a plan for government action; Gore himself soon seconded the motion during a widely publicized appearance on *Oprah*. Not to be outdone, Republicans deputized Lynn Cheney, the wife of GOP vice-presidential nominee Dick Cheney, to testify before the Senate Commerce Committee, where she too excoriated the peddlers of cinematic vulgarity and mayhem.

No less predictable, though diametrically opposed, was the response of the critics and commentators, who greeted the outcry over the FTC report with a collective yawn. Citing past instances of political grandstanding on the subject, Walter Goodman of the *New York Times* and Jack Shafer of *Slate* dismissed the current flap as little more than bourgeois hysteria. The author Richard Rhodes, writing on the oped page of the *Times*, pointed to the failure of researchers to establish any "link between entertainment and violent behavior" among young people, declaring the real problem to be not Hollywood but child abuse and the easy availability of guns. And in the *New Republic*, Andrew Sullivan wondered why, given our declining rates of juvenile murder and assault, everyone was getting so worked up. Indeed, Sullivan speculated, youth crime may be down precisely *because of* the success of violent movies and video games, which serve as a "giant sublimation of the urges most young males have a hard time controlling."

As for the entertainment industry itself, its representatives also played their appointed role, noisily invoking the First Amendment and the prerogatives of "artistic freedom." "We're talking censorship here, plain and simple," proclaimed Vince McMahon, chairman of World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, whose *Smackdown!*, a prime-time television show adored by young boys, features wrestlers grabbing their crotches and bellowing "Suck it!" to their scantily clad "whores."

But the indignation of the country's entertainment elite was both pro-forma and short-lived, assuaged within a few days by Senator Lieberman's soothing declaration, at a $4-million Beverly Hills fundraiser, that he and Vice President Gore actually had "tremendous regard for this industry." What this meant about the putatively worrisome problem of sex and violence in the media was not lost on Lieberman's intended audience. As one movie director observed, "We're not going to hear one more thing about it until 2004."

And so, between the brazen pandering and flipflopping of the politicians, the reflexive dismissals of journalists, and the pious swaggering of Hollywood, the issues raised by the FTC report would seem to have been quickly put to rest. But not quite.

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PROTESTS AGAINST the supposedly corrupting effects of mass entertainment are nothing new in America. Early 20th-century reformers fretted about nickelodeons, with their garish crime stories and come-hither starlets; the *Chicago Tribune* denounced them as "ministering to the lowest passions of childhood." In 1912, in perhaps the first example of a copycat crime to be blamed on the media, a young man cited the twelve-minute silent movie *The Great Train Robbery* as the inspiration for his attempted railroad heist.

It was not until 1934, however, that Hollywood, bowing to pressure from religious and other private groups as well as the threat of federal action, first agreed to regulate the content of its films. Under rules known as the Hays Code, not only were brutal killings banned from the big screen but so too were any mention of childbirth, words like "eunuch," and (most ridiculous of all in the eyes of critics) scenes of tender passion in which the paramours' feet did not remain firmly planted on the ground.

By mid-century, with the arrival of television and other new forms of entertainment for children, Congress finally got into the act, prompted in large part by the rising rate of juvenile delinquency. The era's most famous investigation of the subject was conducted in the early 1950's under the leadership of Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee. The Kefauver hearings, as they came to be known, are remembered in particular for solemnly probing the deleterious effects of . . . comic books. The chief witness against the industry was the psychiatrist Fredric Wertham, author of the luridly titled *The Seduction of the Innocent*, who argued that the comics were to blame for many a juvenile crime and suicide.

In Wertham's defense, it must be said that the comic books in question were primarily of the "horror" genre—a sadist's gallery of hangings, flagellations, severed heads, and bloody axes. But as the critic Robert Warshow noted at the time,* prompted by his eleven-year-old son's devotion to the offending books, whatever was legitimate in Wertham's concerns was neutralized not only by his naive view of cause and effect but by his failure to discriminate between the banal and the noxious. No sooner had Wertham blasted *The Vault of Horror* than he turned his ire on *Captain Marvel*—for making children attempt to fly.

Nevertheless, Congress was duly impressed by such expert pronouncements, and new regulations for the comic-book industry soon followed. More important perhaps was the boost that the widely covered hearings gave to the career of Senator Kefauver, who was tapped shortly thereafter to serve as Adlai Stevenson's running mate on the Democratic ticket for the White House.

SINCE THE 1950's, the issue of how the popular media affect the juvenile id has proved irresistible to politicians. Members of Congress have introduced some 30 bills over the years in an effort to regulate television violence (only two of them have passed). And high-profile youth crimes almost always spark official inquiries into the role of the media, the current FTC report being at least in part a response to the 1999 shooting rampage at Columbine High School in Colorado.

But not only has just about every attempt to address this problem proved ineffectual, the level of debate on the subject has not advanced much in a half-century. Today's experts on youth and the media generally share the same humorless, literal-minded spirit of Warshow's Dr. Wertham. "By age 18," intones a typical study, "the average American child will have viewed about 200,000 acts of violence," including "8,000 murders before he finishes elementary school." The numbers are meant to shock, but in reality they only inure. How can a phenomenon of such magnitude possibly be resisted? Would exposing children to just 100,000 acts of violence improve matters?

And what are "acts of violence"? One prominent researcher includes such things as the serial slapping of the Three Stooges and the death, by way of tornado-blown house, of the Wicked Witch of the East in *The Wizard of Oz*. A study published this past summer by two Harvard researchers in the prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association* tabulates the purportedly ominous number of violent scenes in G-rated movies, thereby managing to throw *Pinocchio* into the same junk heap as *Natural Born Killers*. Not only does such reductionism make no sense in itself, it also ignores the anarchic impulse that has always colored the best of popular culture, from *Punch and Judy* to vaudeville to *The Simpsons*, and it has served to alienate those who might otherwise sympathize with the antiviolence cause.

Research on the actual effect of children's exposure to media, while sometimes suggestive, poses a different set of problems. Most studies are based on what is known as "social learning theory," the idea that when children repeatedly see an aggressive behavior on television or in movies they will accept it as normal and imitate it. Thus, the theory goes, boys who spend hours viewing *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* are more likely to bully their classmates than those who watch *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*. What such studies obviously fail to explain is why this relationship holds true so infrequently. Perhaps the most striking counterexample is Japan, where young students consume enormous quantities of ferociously violent cartoons but seldom engage in playground brawls, much less any kind of serious violence.

No more satisfying is research that tracks viewing habits and behavior over time in an effort to demonstrate a correlation between the two. In a 22-year study of a group of individuals growing up in a semirural New York town, the psychologist Leonard Eron of the University of

* "Paul, the Horror Comics, and Dr. Wertham," COMMENTARY, June 1954.

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Michigan found that those who have watched a lot of violent television at age eight are more likely to commit acts of violence later in life. But does this prove that such shows make people aggressive or, rather, that aggressive types are attracted to entertainment matching their temperament?

In another famous study, Brandon Centerwall found a doubling of the white homicide rate in South Africa in the years after television was introduced in that country. Extrapolating from his research, he concluded that, without television, the United States would have 10,000 fewer murders a year and much less rape, assault, and child abuse. It is exactly the same sort of social-scientific logic, of course, that leads Andrew Sullivan to suggest that increasingly graphic violence in the media might have been responsible for recent *declines* in homicide and assault among young people. Such mirror-image conclusions prove nothing more profound than that correlation and causation are very different things.

BUT THE most serious defect of our seemingly interminable debate over children and the media is not so much the poor quality of the evidence on offer but how the issue is framed in the first place. Whatever the exact role played by movies, TV shows, and video games in promoting acts of violence, large and small, there is more to be concerned about than whether the entertainment industry turns children into outright brutes. Violence may be the worst but is hardly the only instance of our failure to socialize our young.

Compared with earlier generations, today's children are fatter and more prone to diabetes. There can be no doubt that much of the blame falls to the passive, sedentary entertainments that dominate their leisure time; playing electronic basketball on a Nintendo Game Boy is no substitute for shooting hoops at the playground. In addition, accustomed as children now are to a constantly changing array of visual stimulation—and to the remote control's power to wipe away any scene that does not immediately engage them—they often have exceedingly short attention spans. An enterprising researcher might do well to look for a connection between the dizzying pace of today's screen images and soaring rates of Attention Deficit Disorder.

The imperious need for variety and intensity does perhaps its greatest harm in stunting intellectual and aesthetic development. Patience does not come naturally to children, and those who have become habituated to the glittering surfaces of movies, television shows, and popular music quickly lose interest in forms of literature and music whose pleasures yield themselves only with time and effort. Many educators now complain about students who, expecting to be entertained, seem to lack the mental equipment necessary for a serious engagement with books and ideas.

Not that these students are without imagination. To the contrary: their minds are filled with the most grotesque plots and images of our popular culture. Writing recently in the *Gettysburg Review*, a creative-writing teacher named Cathy Day described how her college students populate their stories with homicidal maniacs, battered women, maimed children, and prostitutes. When she asked one student about the unhappy fate of her story's protagonist, a high-school cheerleader, the young woman shrugged, "I didn't know what to do with my character, and my friend came into the room and said, 'Why don't you have her get raped?'"

What such seeming worldliness conceals is its opposite: a remarkably naïve, not to say infantile, view of adult attitudes and responsibilities, much of it courtesy of popular culture. Though the entertainment industry is often—and rightly—taken to task for appealing to the juvenile imagination on its crudest level, a no less common strategy for boosting ratings and sales is to flatter children with images of themselves as hip and aware. Eight-year-olds get a wise-acre cartoon character like Bart Simpson, ten-year-olds a strutting Britney Spears, and twelve-year-olds a hormonally charged *Dawson's Creek*, a television show featuring splendidly endowed, bed-jumping high-schoolers. Such fare, an irresistible lure for the young, who naturally long to grow up, persuades them of their own moral and sexual maturity long before they have begun to achieve it.

MANY OF these problems have been at least dimly understood for a long time—it was in 1961, after all, that FCC chairman Newton Minow famously described television as a "vast wasteland"—but in our increasingly media-saturated world they have taken on a new urgency. What was once a mere diversion in the lives of children now provides much of the infrastructure of their minds. There are some 250 million televisions in the country, one for almost every American, with two-thirds of children aged eight to eighteen having sets in their own bedrooms. And television is just a small part of today's panoply of entertainment. The Kaiser Foundation reports that the various products of the mass media now occupy an average of six-and-a-half hours of a child's day.

Writing in 1954, Robert Warshow well understood that his son's beloved horror comics provided a fantasy of lawless freedom, but also knew that this slightly unwholesome interest was balanced by the restraints and complexities learned in activities to which the boy devoted most of his time: reading real books, drawing, painting, playing with toads, writing stories and poems, looking at things through a microscope. Today, this list of activities would sound hopelessly boring, even childish, to the average eleven-year-old familiar with the "sophisticated" products of an ever-more shameless entertainment industry.

So what is to be done? By government, not much—though even

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small measures help. For all the grandstanding inspired by the FTC report, it did actually shame movie companies into accepting certain limits on their advertising and forswearing the exploitation of children in the market-testing of R-rated productions. Local governments can make a difference as well, though some measures now being contemplated are at best palliatives, more often placebos. A recent Indianapolis ordinance requiring public arcades to place some distance between sexually explicit or violent video games and those more suitable for children would have been a tiny step in the right direction—had it not been struck down in court.

More promising, because less inhibited by constitutional concerns, are the efforts of grassroots movements and watchdog groups to discourage what William J. Bennett has called "the race to the bottom" in popular entertainment. The Parents Television Council, a Hollywood watchdog group, has waged an impressive campaign against the lurid television spectacles of the World Wrestling Federation, prompting many advertisers to jump ship. Other groups have urged an outright ban on advertising targeted at preschoolers. What is most interesting about these protests—especially in light of the media's tendency to portray the battle as one between prigs and progressives—is their wide political appeal. The activists who have recently resisted the expansion of Channel One—a company that provides television "news" to classrooms in exchange for being allowed to advertise to this captive audience—run the gamut from Gary Ruskin, the Naderite director of a group called Commercial Alert, to Phyllis Schlafly, head of the deeply conservative Eagle Forum.

In the end, however, no amount of government tinkering or organized protest can take the place of the individual adults who have direct influence over children. And here the news is disheartening, for not only are those adults failing to provide a meaningful alternative to the culture of the mass media, many are in fact embracing it.

In the name of "appealing to children's interests," for example, many teachers now welcome popular culture into the classroom. Instead of requiring students to write essays, they ask them to produce soap operas or music videos. A second grader of my acquaintance, recently assigned a library project on an important woman, was delighted to find that one of the suggested subjects was Madonna (not the Virgin Mary, needless to say). A recent article in the *New York Times* featured several teachers and the nation's poet laureate, Stanley Kunitz, praising the classroom use of hip-hop music—some of the lowest around—for its capacity to "excite young people about language and the creative act."

And parents? According to polls and surveys, they express profound alarm at the trash that threatens to colonize their children's minds. Yet their actions tell a different story. The Kaiser Foundation found that half of all parents impose no rules on what their children may watch on television. Indeed, the FTC report itself unwittingly confirmed that the childrearing practices of many American parents are not so out of sync with Hollywood's marketing needs. After all, the nine- and ten-year-olds who were used by the movie studios in their focus groups were allowed to participate only with their parents' consent. Nor was much adverse comment to be heard about the supposedly child-friendly magazines and television programs that ran the offending advertisements for R-rated movies—places like MTV and *Cosmo Girl*, a junior version of Helen Gurley Brown's racy magazine. Protesting that your ten-year-old son was subjected to a trailer for the R-rated *Scream* while watching *Smackdown!* is a little like complaining that he was bitten by a rat while scavenging at the local dump.

The dissonance between what Americans say about the entertainment industry and what they actually do about it at home reflects a deep anxiety about exercising parental authority. Parents may be disgusted by much of what their children are exposed to, but they seem even more disturbed by the prospect of actively asserting their own beliefs. They simply hope that somehow their children will learn, on their own, to "make good decisions"—a ubiquitous phrase among experts that now appears to represent the highest aspiration of American childrearing.

Why are parents so inhibited in this regard? Some seem to worry they will damage their children's self-esteem (by suggesting that the little ones' judgment is not trustworthy), or that playing the heavy will otherwise harm the parent-child relationship. Others shrug that their children will find a way to watch and listen to what they want anyway. Most telling are those parents who are reluctant to manage their child's media diet on the grounds that they "do not believe in censorship," as if telling an eight-year-old he may not listen to rap stars like Dr. Dre ("If it was slightly darker, lights was little dimmer/my d--- be stuck in yo windpipe") or Eminem ("Don't you yell, bitch/No one can hear you/Now shut the f--- up and get what's comin' to you") were the household equivalent of Stalinist thought control.

But censorship is clearly integral to effective child-rearing. A child cannot be prepared for adulthood without learning he may not say and do certain things, either because they are wrong in themselves or because he is not yet prepared for them. Indeed, such moral education is perhaps nowhere more necessary than in a free society like our own, where so many restraints are largely self-imposed. American children, in short, need to learn not just the formal meaning of the First Amendment but the responsibilities that go along with it. And they need to learn them from their elders.

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Books in Review

Scoop

Drudge Manifesto
by Matt Drudge,
with Julia Phillips
New American Library. 247 pp. $22.95

Reviewed by
Dan Seligman

FREQUENTLY ASKED Questions about this crazy best-seller and its author:

Q: Is it okay to read Matt Drudge? I mean okay for a serious person?

A: It is more than okay. It is highly desirable. Just to be seen carrying the book is desirable, maybe even better than reading it.

Q: Wherefore better?

A: Because public possession maximizes the possibility of irking fans of Dan Rather, Frank Rich, and the *Columbia Journalism Review*.

Q: You are positing that the media establishment disdains and calumniates Drudgism?

A: It hates his guts, his persona, his trademark fedora, and the *Drudge Report*, possibly in that order. The *Drudge Report* is the Internet site where he lets fly with his version of the news. Major media honchos say the stuff on the site is just gossip, that Drudge does no reporting of his own, that he revels in dirt, that his material is unchecked. But what really kills them is that he often gets out there first with big breaking news stories. Also that the aforesaid *Report* (you get to it via www.drudgereport.com) is currently garnering 1.8 million hits a day.

Q: So how does he do all this?

A: That is the marvel and the miracle. Big-league journalism organizations have hundreds or even thousands of reporters, scores of bureaus around the world, and access to superduper transmission technologies, while Matt Drudge has been living and working alone in a small apartment in Hollywood, with (on the evidence of his *Manifesto*) only a cat to talk to and only a cheap Packard Bell computer based on a 486 Intel chip—not even a Pentium. And yet the Monica Lewinsky story was out there on Drudge's web site at a time when the big-leaguers were dopily telling the world that Bill Clinton was in great shape because his grand-jury testimony on Paula Jones had gone so well. Frequenters of Drudge had long since learned that the grand-jury testimony left Clinton a wreck because there were more questions about Lewinsky than about Jones.

Q: Yes, yes, but how does Drudge out-scoop all those highly compensated media characters?

A: The journalism-school cliché about reporting is that shoe leather is what gets you the big stories. But shoe leather is the old technology. In the Internet age, Drudge gets out front mainly by checking his e-mail and phone messages and finding that the world is full of people who have . . . (drum-beat) . . . A Secret. And who think it would be neat to blab this secret to the *Drudge Report*, and thereby to the whole planet. Like the Republican politician who hauled off and told Drudge in 1996 that Jack Kemp would be Bob Dole's vice-presidential nominee a

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DAN SELIGMAN, *who writes frequently on the news media, is a contributing editor of* Forbes. *His article, "Giuliani and After," appeared in last month's* COMMENTARY.

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day before the announcement. Or the reporter on the scene who clued in Drudge to Princess Diana's death, enabling him to beat CNN by eight minutes.

Q: Is that all there is to it?

A: Yes, if Drudge thinks the source is solid and the risks are reasonable. In other cases, including Oval Office debauchery, the ball takes a lot of bounces.

Q: Kindly particularize.

A: Here is the incredible Lewinsky sequence:

(1) Late at night on November 20, 1997, Drudge gets an e-mail from an apparently knowledgeable tipster stating that POTUS (the President of the United States) has been having it off with a White House intern; that FLOTUS (the First Lady) does not know about it; and that further details might be available from the omniscient New York literary agent, Lucianne Goldberg. Wary of this one, our hero puts it in his "Keeps" file, lets it go at that, and opts to stay with another Clinton story he has been working on.

(2) Drudge reveals the tremendous news that POTUS has rented a raunchy movie, *Boogie Nights*, for viewing, presumably without FLOTUS, in the White House theater.

(3) It is mid-afternoon on January 17, 1998, and the original tipster has suddenly surfaced again. He now says the intern story will be in an upcoming *Newsweek* feature by the reporter Michael Issikoff.

(4) Drudge gets a call from a guy in Conway, Arkansas, who has made a career out of following Clinton's sex life, and senses that this person also has the scent of a big new story.

(5) Drudge finds Issikoff's home number (thanks to www.switchboard.com), gets his wife on the phone, identifies himself, and is rapidly hung up on.

(6) Drudge calls Lucianne Goldberg, mentions that he is checking out a rumor about an upcoming *Newsweek* bust of Clinton and the intern. Goldberg the omniscient tells him the intern's name, tells him about Linda Tripp and the tapes, and, best of all, insouciantly mentions that *Newsweek* has spiked the story.

(7) Drudge puts all this into a *Drudge Report* file, nervously hits the "Send" key, then starts wondering if his career is finished. But, of course, it is about to flower as never before. Not only has he beaten *Newsweek* to the punch with its own story but—over the next few days—he will have made fools of numerous commentators who have been deriding the whole scoop as the phantasmic outpourings of a screwed-up gossip-monger.

Q: Back to the book. Is it fun or not-fun to read?

A: It is both, often at the same time. Drudge tells you up front that in 1984 he graduated 341st in a high-school class of 355, and that he never went to college or had a serious job. Oddly enough, however, he turns out to be an interesting writer. Or at least he and Julia Phillips turn out to be an interesting writer. One way or another, the book has a loping, free-associating, hyperkinetic style that gets to you after a while. It is full of dimly relevant poetic efforts. It is festooned with typographical stunts, as in a page preceding a section about network television on which the only text is "you're boring," in tiny footnote-sized type. Somehow this all works, at least most of the time. Also, Drudge is often genuinely funny, especially when responding to media pomposity about his scandal-mongering and pointing up the errors, evasions, and embarrassing libel settlements of the guys he is talking back to. On the other hand. . . .

Q: He is not Walter Lippmann?

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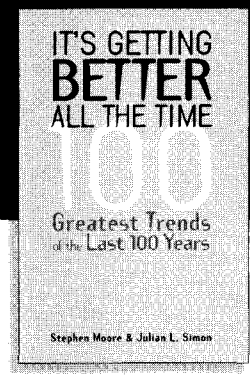

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A: All too true. He is not a thinker. Confusions abound, often at critical junctures. Drudge identifies himself as a libertarian and links this position to the unregulated, free-form culture of the Internet, which has in effect given him his own "newspaper" with its own "presses." Okay, so far. But then he gets carried away by some large misplaced vision and suddenly starts identifying his little libertarian self with the anarchosyndicalist sophomores carrying on against the World Trade Organization in Seattle. And groans because TV will not "tell the story of tens of thousands of people screaming above the satellites, hoping the world will hear a story the networks refuse to tell without a sneer."

Q: So his libertarianism is impure. Does it really matter?

A: Wait. There is worse. There are also Naderite deviations.

Q: Naderite libertarianism? Is that anatomically possible?

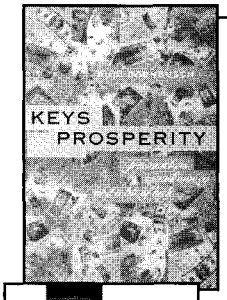
A: Seemingly so. In Drudge's case, it all begins with his rage against the media conglomerates, which leads to heavy breathing about the power of big money and our enslavement by big corporations. As in: "The Corporate State would have you believe that you must begin and end your day praying to its God of Demographic Dollars." Drudge ought to be smiling when he says that, but instead he seems as serious as Nader himself.

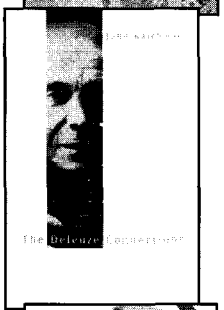
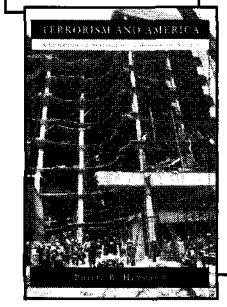
Q: And now for the big question. We are talking about a manifesto. A manifesto is supposed to have a main point. What is the main point of this one? And I have a follow-up.

A: Your question is a good one, and highlights Drudge's big weakness. *Drudge Manifesto* does have one intriguing thought, repeatedly stated, which is that things have definitely changed when a guy operating all by his lonesome can command so much attention and gain so huge a following, and occasionally outfox the big media conglomerates. But that is not a message. The real message, unstated but inescapable, is "Hey, look at me. Look at me. LOOK AT ME." In headline type, if possible.

Q: Here's my follow-up: shouldn't there be an article, definite or otherwise, before the words *Drudge Manifesto*?

A: Yes, but this way the reader gets to *Drudge* faster. And that is still an okay place to get.



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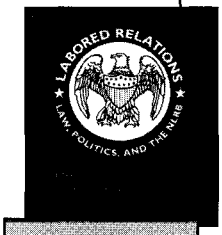

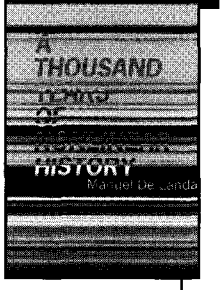

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Private Connections

The Talmud and the Internet: A Journey between Worlds
by Jonathan Rosen
Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 132 pp. $16.00

Reviewed by
Jon D. Levenson

Among the foundational literatures of the world's civilizations, none is harder to classify than the Talmud. A gigantic and complex set of volumes whose core contents were assembled and edited by the end of the 5th century C.E., it interweaves passionate narrative and touching anecdotes with dry legal analysis and interpretation of Scripture that itself calls out for (and receives) interpretation. Subjects change abruptly without the least sense of self-consciousness, and debates are regularly presented between rabbis who lived generations, even centuries, apart. The Talmud has no clear beginning or end, and every discussion in it presupposes others, some of them unrecorded. The basis of all subsequent Jewish law, the Talmud nonetheless often leaves us in the dark about the conclusion of its legal debates; luckily, the thoughts and decisions of medieval and modern commentators are themselves incorporated onto every exceedingly busy page.

In *The Talmud and the Internet*, Jonathan Rosen, a young novelist and essayist, finds the baffling disjointedness and anomalousness of the Talmud to be an asset rather than a liability. Indeed, running as a leitmotif throughout this slim volume of reflections is the anomalousness of Rosen's own biography and, more subtly, of modern identity itself. "In writing this book," he tells us at the outset, "I realized that what interests me is learning to embrace contradictory forces: ancient tradition and contemporary chaos, doubt and faith, the living and the dead, tragedy and hope." Toward the end, Rosen is still speaking of his by now painfully evident "impulse to flee in two directions at once—to defect . . . to the secular world and to find, as well, a traditional religious home."

Rosen's two grandmothers symbolize, for him, the contrary directions in which he feels this "impulse to flee." One was well-off and basically secular, an American woman who lived into her nineties and whose final days Rosen minutely describes. The other was a Polish-born Jewess murdered by the Nazis long before he was born. At the close of his reflections, he defines his challenge as one of doing "justice to my own experience as the grandchild of those two women. A grandchild of optimistic American *and* of tragic European experience." But the "justice" he arrives at is not a synthesis of these twin legacies but rather resignation in the face of an ambivalence that he seems powerless to resolve.

Fascinated by the Talmud, Rosen also reports that he does not "much like going to synagogue," an aversion he links to his dislike of other institutions: "libraries, museums, hospitals, concert halls, or department stores." His own preference is not for "organized religion" but for "private connections." Luckily, it is in two places, the Talmud and the Internet, that he finds an objective correlative to his own sense of dislocation and homelessness.

"When the Jewish people lost their home (the land of Israel) and God lost His (the Temple)," Rosen writes, "then a new way of being was devised and Jews became the people of the book and not the people of the Temple or the land." An analogous loss of place, an analo-

Jon D. Levenson *is the Albert A. List professor of Jewish studies at Harvard Divinity School and the author, most recently, of* The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: the Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity, *and* Esther: A Commentary.

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gous worldwide dispersion in which we are nevertheless connected by words, is to be seen in the Internet, which, like the Talmud, offers "a world of unbounded curiosity, of argument and information, where anyone with a modem can wander out of the wilderness for a while, ask a question, and receive an answer." The Talmud, he goes on,

> helped Jews survive after the destruction of the Temple by making Jewish culture portable and personal. In the same way, there are elements in the inclusiveness of the Internet well suited to a world that is both more uprooted and more connected than ever before. Finding a home inside exile, finding unity inside infinity, finding a self inside a sea of competing voices was an ancient challenge and is a modern one too.

The similarity of the Talmud and the Internet thus somehow consoles Rosen for the pain of an identity split between European and American Jewish experience, and between religion and secularity: "I take comfort in thinking that a modern technological medium echoes an ancient one."

ROSEN'S CONSOLATION is, alas, a shallow one, for the analogy upon which it is founded is in point of fact mostly a mirage. To be sure, he does recognize differences between the Talmud and the Internet. "The Talmud," he correctly observes, "was produced by the moral imperative of Jewish law. . . . Nobody was trying to buy airline tickets or meet a date." But how much likeness can there be between, on the one hand, a book relentlessly focused on morality and law, and, on the other hand, a medium that lacks not only all fixed content but even, as Rosen himself remarks almost in passing, a "moral center"?

As against Henry Adams's early-20th-century judgment in *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* that "technological power depose[s] Divinity," Rosen bravely suggests that "the invisible linkages forged by electric power, and the computer that is the child of those forces, constitute a cathedral . . . no less grand" than Chartres. But one need not subscribe to Adams's misguided polarization of tradition and technology to see in the Internet as much potential for things the talmudic rabbis would abominate as for things they would appreciate. One thinks of pornography, for example, or neo-Nazi propaganda, or consumer fraud, or instructions on building explosives—all of them rather different from the airline tickets and dates that Rosen lamely mentions. The Internet not only lacks a moral center; it is intrinsically amoral, and, by itself, unable to generate or sustain a community committed to carrying out moral imperatives and obeying law of any kind, Jewish or otherwise.

In Rosen's mind, "the Talmud . . . was the product of a culture that had already learned the impracticality of identifying faith with architectural or even religious unity." This too is wrong, just as it is wrong to say that the Talmud took the place of the Temple (the synagogue more nearly did that). Endlessly and eloquently, the Talmud attests to its authors' faith that the Jews would eventually be restored to their true geographical home, that the Temple would eventually be rebuilt and the forms of worship associated with it (and ordained in the Torah) reinaugurated. In brief, the rabbis regarded as abnormal and temporary, even if of insufferably long duration, the dislocation and homelessness that Rosen takes as his—and our—inevitable destiny.

As for the religious unity of the Jewish people, on which Rosen imagines the rabbis had given up, it was, rather, a central motivation for their advancing a delimited canon of Scripture and standardizing Jewish practice wherever they could. This is about as far as one can get from a culture in which faceless individuals see what they want, say what they want, and buy what they want with a click of the mouse—a world of "private connections" with little or no public accountability.

GIVEN ITS inherently amoral character, the new information technology can, of course, also be utilized for positive ends—including the diffusion of talmudic learning. And so it has been, with impressive results. But even here there are limitations. Rosen notes correctly that "people are meant to study the Talmud in pairs," that it "isn't read like a book but studied aloud, chanted, lived." The Talmud is, in other words, the product of a real, not a virtual, community, and its "moral imperative" does not coexist peacefully with the culture of individual choice and personal preference that the Internet has carried to dangerous new levels.

Indeed, though the Talmud conveys massive amounts of information, its goal is something very different—namely, wisdom. This wisdom is conveyed primarily not on the screen, or even on the page, but in the relationship of teacher to student in a living society whose life blood is an inseparable union of practice and learning. Anyone wishing to delve into the Talmud in more depth than Jonathan Rosen's intriguing but superficial analogy accommodates would be well advised to turn off the computer he finds so congenial and darken the door of the synagogue he finds so repellent.

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Gary Rosen, Managing Editor

War Hero

Henry M. Jackson: A Life in Politics

by Robert G. Kaufman

University of Washington. 548 pp. $30.00

Reviewed by
Arch Puddington

NOT LONG after he became President in 1981, Ronald Reagan launched a frontal ideological assault on the USSR. A decade later, the cold war was over and the Soviet Union was no more. Though Reagan and his team deserve immense credit for difficult decisions taken in the face of considerable risk and even more considerable ridicule, a figure who played a no less essential role in the successful prosecution of the decades-long struggle with Soviet Communism was Senator Henry M. Jackson.

The contribution made by Jackson is illuminated in this skillfully written and thoroughly researched biography by Robert Kaufman, who teaches political science at the University of Vermont. But even aside from his role in the twilight struggle with the USSR, Jackson was also unquestionably one of the most important political figures of the postwar era. A towering figure in the U.S. Senate, a near vice-presidential choice of John F. Kennedy in 1960, he was a presidential candidate in his own right in two consecutive elections in the 1970's. More broadly, his life is the story of the political franchise known as cold-war liberalism that not long ago dominated the American scene but has now entirely disappeared.

HENRY JACKSON was born in 1912 in the smallish industrial city of Everett, Washington to Norwegian immigrant parents. With the exception of a brief stint in private legal practice, he spent his entire adult life as an elected public official. In 1940, having already served a term as county prosecutor, he won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1952, he navigated a course to the Senate, where he remained until his death, consistently winning elections by margins that made him the most successful vote-getter in the history of the state of Washington.

Though his family did not suffer privation during the Great Depression of the 1930's, Jackson came to political maturity in the midst of that era's ubiquitous unemployment and poverty. He became a liberal of the New Deal-Fair Deal school, and in particular an advocate of federal spending for highways, hydroelectric projects, and other public works. In foreign policy he inclined, like the majority of his district's constituents in the prewar years, to isolationism, and even the Nazi invasion of his parents' beloved Norway in March 1941 did not sway him from this stance.

But further devastating blows in Europe and the Pacific did. During World War II, serving in Congress, Jackson was indelibly marked by the experience of watching firsthand as Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill waged the struggle to rescue civilization. Indeed, Kaufman reminds us, Jackson's most fundamental beliefs about foreign policy derived from the lessons of World War II: "the folly of isolationism and appeasement, the importance of democracies remaining militarily strong and standing firm against totalitarianism, and the need for the United States to accept and sustain its pivotal role as a world power."

Following the defeat of Nazi Germany, Jackson emerged in the early days of the cold war as a consistent supporter of the Truman administration's policy of containing the USSR. But he went a step further than most of his fellow Demo-

ARCH PUDDINGTON *is vice president for research at Freedom House and the author of* Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. *He is currently at work on a biography of the late trade-union leader Lane Kirkland.*

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crats in the House and Senate, immersing himself in the intricacies of weapons systems and nuclear strategy to become a leading expert on war in the atomic age. By the mid-1950's, he had made a name for himself as a trenchant critic of the Eisenhower administration's policy of massive retaliation, arguing instead that reliance on nuclear weapons at the expense of conventional armed strength lacked credibility as a strategy and therefore courted real danger.

As the 1960's rolled in, Jackson had become the quintessential cold-war liberal—at home a supporter of civil rights, organized labor, and activist government, abroad a supporter of a strong military and of the readiness to intervene in order to check Communist expansionism. But the early 1960's were also to prove the high-water mark for this particular strain of politics. As the decade progressed, the Vietnam war and domestic radicalism combined to tear the Democrats asunder, and by its close the party's leading lights were advocating an isolationism that veered into outright anti-Americanism, attacking the U.S. military and demanding an immediate withdrawal from Southeast Asia that would leave the South Vietnamese people to their fate.

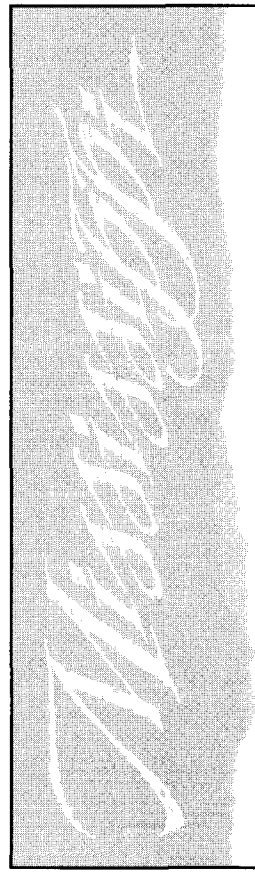
Jackson was a lone dissenter, the sole non-Southern Democrat to give consistent support to President Richard Nixon's defense budgets and his efforts to bring American troops home from Vietnam without simply turning tail. And where many of his liberal colleagues were now citing the desirability of reaching an accommodation with the USSR, and criticizing Nixon for moving too slowly with the newly unveiled policy of détente, Jackson warned that accommodation was a chimera, and that America's foreign-policy confusions and retreats were only augmenting the danger posed by the totalitarian dictators in Moscow.

Paradoxically, at the moment when Jackson was most isolated in his own party, he also rose to the apex of his power. As chairman of two key Senate subcommittees, and as a master of the legislative process who was also blessed with a ferociously loyal and effective staff, Jackson fought the left-wing drift among the Democrats while simultaneously working to stop the Nixon administration's Soviet policy from sliding from one of strategic retreat into one of outright appeasement.

Along the way, Jackson was instrumental in blocking what he saw as one-sided U.S. concessions in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. By raising the issue of Soviet Jewish emigration in the context of human rights, he was also able to put the Nixon administration (not to mention the Kremlin itself) on the defensive. The Jackson-Vanik amendment—linking a relaxation of trade restrictions with permission for Soviet Jews to emigrate—dealt a hard blow to the policy of détente while at the same time encouraging those within the USSR who, against seemingly impossible odds, were pressing for an end to autocracy.

Jackson's foreign-policy successes, predicated on his formidable ability to build coalitions of disparate supporters, led him to seek the presidency twice in the 1970's. Neither attempt fared well. In 1972, he was not yet the household name he was to become as the decade wore on, and his campaign, ignored by the press, failed to get off the ground. He made greater headway in 1976, winning primaries in Massachusetts and New York before petering out and losing to Jimmy Carter.

In both 1972 and 1976, Jackson was hobbled by two ineluctable circumstances: the leftward shift in the



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Democratic party, which had deprived him of support among the party's elite, and his style as a campaigner, which (to put it gently) was ill-suited to the television age. As Kaufman makes clear, Jackson may have been one of the most principled and upright men ever to walk across the stage of American politics, but he was also one of the least charismatic.

Jackson's failure to win his party's nomination signaled the real terminus of the cold-war liberalism that he, virtually alone among national figures, still embodied at the end of the 70's. Nor was it only in the realm of foreign policy that the Democratic party had made a deep left turn. Even the tax-and-spend liberalism that Jackson hewed to so faithfully had run its course, at least in its traditional guise, having been supplanted—or, more properly, supplemented—by a new-age politics that substituted racial preferences for equal rights, multiculturalism for assimilation, and radical environmental regulation for conservation.

Jackson had thus arrived at a political cul-de-sac. Although theoretically he could have drawn closer to the Republicans or even switched parties, he remained, as Kaufman shows, a loyal Democrat to the end, albeit of the old school. (His ineradicable suspicion of the marketplace was very much on display during the energy crisis of the 1970's, when, writes Kaufman, Jackson "made matters worse by pushing for such counterproductive measures as price controls on oil and gas.") Still, there were limits beyond which he would not go. In 1980, for example, under pressure to endorse Jimmy Carter's bid for a second term, Jackson waited until the last possible moment and even then spoke up with palpable reluctance. After Carter lost, he gave his blessing to members and former members of his staff, among them Elliott Abrams, Charles Horner, and Richard Perle, who went to work in the Reagan administration.

Jackson died of heart failure in 1983. Although, unlike his staffers, he thus did not play a role in the final drama of the Soviet Union's collapse, he had been crucially responsible for shoring up the very foundations of America's postwar foreign policy in the years when that policy was coming under fierce assault from protesters and elected officials alike. In the words of former Senator Howard Baker, Jackson "made sure we did not lose the cold war during the 1970's so that Ronald Reagan could win it in the 1980's." Robert Kaufman's very useful and much needed biography demonstrates conclusively the truth of Baker's tribute.

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God's Name in Vain:
The Wrongs and Rights
of Religion in Politics
by Stephen L. Carter
Basic. 248 pp. $26.00

Reviewed by
Terry Eastland

Considering all the God-talk that was heard in this year's presidential campaign—much of it, unexpectedly, from the Democratic side of the aisle—Stephen Carter's latest book could not have arrived at a more opportune moment. A professor of law at Yale, Carter has written before about the relationship between faith and politics, most notably in *The Culture of Disbelief* (1993). There, he lamented the tendency of contemporary American culture—and of the country's elites in particular—to insist that religious people (like himself) leave behind their deepest convictions when they enter the public square. In *God's Name in Vain*, he returns to this theme but also addresses the fundamental question it raises: "If religion is to be actively involved in politics, what is the proper form of that involvement?"

The usual starting point for such a discussion, Carter writes, is to ask how religion "fits into" politics—that is, to try to describe the limits that should apply to its influence on public affairs. But this approach can never satisfy the believer, for whom religion is not something so easily confined. As he says of his own "increasingly evangelical" Christianity:

> My faith does not call me to be a different person only in some hidden persona. My God requires of me that I live a changed life. . . . [I]n whatever sphere of life I might enter, it is my faith that is to lead me.

Because the claims of religion are so comprehensive, in short, it is inevitable that believing Christians—and Jews and Muslims—will at times seek far-reaching changes in society.

Such faith-based activism, Carter points out, has been a crucial part of our history. From the abolitionists and suffragettes to the labor and civil-rights movements, American politics would have been "unimaginable," he writes, without "the religious voice." Nor is that voice any less urgently needed today, when we live in a culture "awash in self-seeking and self-fulfillment and simple selfishness." America's religious communities, Carter suggests, are the likeliest source of the moral energy that will allow us to rise above "the politics of me."

What concerns Carter, therefore, is the emergence in recent decades of an "antireligious politics." This view of public life more or less says that people of faith should stay out of politics altogether, or that, if they must engage in it, they should do so without making religiously based arguments and without—heaven forbid—mentioning God or the Bible.

One salient aspect of this brand of politics is that it is typically wield-

Terry Eastland *was until recently publisher of the* American Spectator. *His articles for* Commentary *include "Religion, Politics & the Clintons" (January 1994) and "In Defense of Religious America" (June 1981).*

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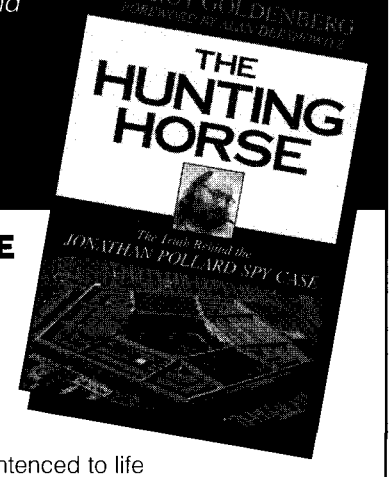

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ed by nonreligious liberals against religious conservatives. The explanation for this, Carter believes, seldom has to do with doubts about whether religious argument "fits comfortably into the proper form of democratic dialogue." Rather, more mundanely, it concerns "the ends that liberals are afraid the [conservative] religious voice might seek." These are ends that liberalism finds "distasteful." Thus, "it was one thing to quote the gospel command to love thy neighbor in order to battle against racial segregation—but quite a different matter, in the liberal vision, to quote the same words to battle against abortion."

At the same time, Carter suggests that there is a still deeper dynamic at work in our antireligious politics. Modern secular liberalism, he argues, has increasingly aspired to a kind of "hegemony." "Not content to serve as a theory of organization of the state," he writes, liberalism "has grown into a theory of organization of private institutions in the state," imposing its principles not just on religious bodies and their members but on every form of social traditionalism. A case in point (which Carter does not cite) is the recent litigation aimed at forcing the Boy Scouts of America to admit avowed homosexuals as scout masters.

By stifling traditional arrangements, liberalism undercuts both diversity and liberty. Conversely, religion, to the extent that it resists liberalism's hegemonic tendencies, safeguards freedom itself—an idea that informs Carter's call for interpretations of the First Amendment that are much friendlier to the devout.

HOW, THEN, are believers to resist this assault on the very possibility of their participation in politics? One option would be to create a religious political party. But, for Carter, this is a "temptation" that must be resisted. Few of the religiously conservative organizations have maintained the vitality they had in the 1980's, he explains, and the reason is precisely that they made the mistake of adapting to the practical demands of political activity, engaging in compromise and attempting to determine the outcome of elections.

"What is wrong with compromise?" Carter asks rhetorically, and responds: "Nothing, if one is a politician. But, potentially, everything, if one is a religionist"—not only the corruption of one's soul, which has now become preoccupied with nonreligious pursuits, but also the defeat of the political goals the religionist has been seeking in the first place. As far as Carter is concerned, religion engages in politics most effectively when it speaks with the voice of the "prophet"—of a Nathan to a King David. With compromise, he warns, "does the power of prophecy disappear."

God's Name in Vain is a useful, if not especially original, believer's brief in behalf of a religious America. Politics needs morality, says Carter, making an observation as old as Aristotle, and because our morality as a people has always derived from our religious beliefs, our politics needs religion. George Washington said as much in his Farewell Address, and it has been repeated of late by, among others, Joseph Lieberman. Which is not to say the message has been heeded: as if to offer fresh evidence for Carter's thesis about the new "antireligious politics," the Anti-Defamation League promptly rebuked Lieberman for siding with President Washington and even for professing his faith in public.

God's Name in Vain intelligently addresses a wide variety of matters, including whether and how voters should take into account statements of faith made by candidates for office. Yet it does *not* treat many of the questions about religion and politics it might have. For example, Carter explicitly declines to address whether a pastor should run for political office. Nor does he ask whether some religions might be incompatible with democracy. Though he writes a great deal about religious conservatism, he has little to say about religious liberalism (as opposed to liberalism *tout court*). Yet religious liberalism is quite alive today (see the involvement of liberal church groups in the Elián González case) and gained expression in Lieberman's speeches. Finally, Carter does not take a stand on the question of abortion, the central moral issue of our time.

One has the sense that Carter will write still more books on religion and politics. If he does, he will find that *God's Name in Vain* will have left him with two major issues to explore, both arising from his own faith tradition (which I share). The first concerns the state. Carter has almost nothing good to say about the state, and yet his own faith is not so hostile to it: Christianity recognizes that temporal authority is ordained by God, and the letters of Paul and Peter instructed the early church to obey legitimate governments. And that, of course, leads to an even thornier question: in the face of decisions that the faithful consider wrong, but that have been made by legitimate authority, how are the faithful to respond?

Second, in stressing that religion is best when it plays a prophetic role, Carter seems to be saying that only the prophet need apply for political work. This is much too narrow a view of vocation, and it fails to recognize that nonprophets, which is to say almost everyone, can make a difference in public life (as in other realms) through hard work that willy-nilly includes compromise.

Consider, for example, the case of someone opposed to abortion who agrees nonetheless to support a measure against partial-birth abortion. What is wrong with that? Why should the perfect be the enemy of the good? Perhaps, in due course, Carter will tell us, and one hopes he will say that it should not be.

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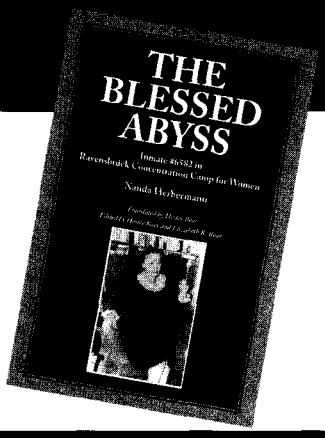

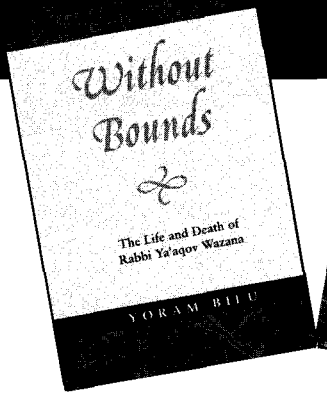

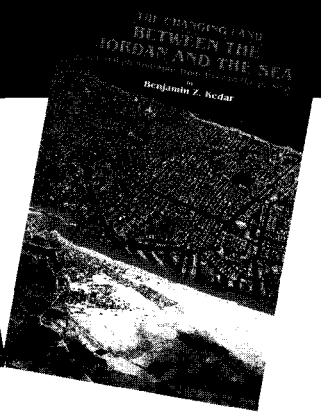

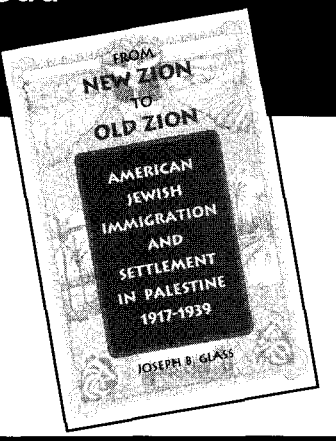

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Nanda Herbermann

Translated by Hester Baer

Edited by Hester Baer and Elizabeth R. Baer

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Talking Feminist Blues

Sex & Power
by Susan Estrich
Riverhead. 287 pp. $24.95

Reviewed by
Noemie Emery

SUPPOSE YOU launched a revolution that nobody wanted? Suppose you crafted a series of sexual-harassment laws, knife-edged and designed to gut nasty conservatives, and they were then used to carve up your best friend? You too might be hurt, angry, confused, and resentful, as Susan Estrich assuredly is.

Estrich first became newsworthy as the manager of the presidential campaign of Michael Dukakis. Since then, she has been a law professor, a regular talking head on Fox News, and, as she incessantly reminds us, a very good Friend of Bill (and of Hillary, and of Al). Estrich, in short, has done well for herself. But her brand of feminism has fared about as well as the hapless Dukakis campaign, having been largely rejected by actual women and all but derailed by the sexual foibles of her friend Bill. In an attempt to explain what has gone wrong and why, she has written a book.

Sex and Power meanders wildly. Its opening chapter surveys current attitudes toward female success, beginning with the meaning of Madeleine Albright's appointment to high office ("she deserves her power"), proceeding to the case of Hillary ("she wants power"), and ending with Estrich herself, with glances along the way at obscure personal acquaintances—"one very ambitious young woman who [sic] I came to know," etc.

Other chapters survey the current state of "gender discrimination" in American law; the inferior status of women in the corporate world; the tension between motherhood and the "fast track"; and Bill Clinton's collision with the law of sexual harassment and its relation to Estrich's own experience as a rape victim 25 years ago.

Though the book is rather short, and set in very large type, distilling its basic message is no easy endeavor. The problem stems to some degree from its form, which is one part memoir, one part polemic, and one part dishonesty. The dishonesty is to be found less in the stands that Estrich adopts than in the way she adopts them: in incomplete, incoherent, fragmented half-arguments that take assumptions as givens and refuse to acknowledge critical counterarguments, much less refute them. The evasions and blustering suggest a mind at times supple but also unable to grapple with the deep contradictions of contemporary feminism.

ONE DIFFICULTY for Estrich concerns real-life women and what she presumes they want. Estrich and her sisters have long assumed that most women are similar to men in their eagerness to scale the ladders of career success. "When I signed up [for the movement]," she writes, "the idea was to get women to the top who would change the rules for everyone. The first wave would open the door, and then throw it wide open" for the ambitious hordes to charge through.

But the hordes never materialized, and many of the women who did charge through turned around and charged right out again, dashing the feminist dream of numerical parity in the law firms, on the corporate boards, and in the halls of Congress. "Among the 2,500 top corporate executives in America, there are 63 women," laments Estrich. This, to her, is a disaster that demands drastic action. She urges women to research the companies that do not have enough women and boycott their products. She thinks someone—"women"? the Justice Department?—should police these offending companies and force them to make amends. "The critical point," she says, "is to see the absence of significant numbers of women in positions of power as a problem."

But a problem for whom? For women, or for the feminists who look to the courts and the government to generate the forced parity that conforms to their wishes? As critics of this idea have pointed out, some professions tilt to one sex or the other for reasons wholly unrelated to discrimination. Few men choose to teach preschool, while few women want to be lumberjacks. And there are entire male-dominated professions, like coal-mining, janitorial work, and garbage-collecting, that feminists themselves have never been particularly eager to integrate along sexual lines.

The small number of women at the top of large companies is due far less to discrimination than to the fact that few women qualify for such positions. "The most challenging careers," the economist Diana Furchtgott-Roth has explained, "require uninterrupted commitments of 60 hours a week, year after year." Pregnancy and child-rearing are almost always incompatible with the pace and intensity of these jobs, for, as Furchtgott-Roth puts it, "a pause, even momentary, leaves one hopelessly behind, passed over in the frenzy of others pursuing the same goal."

ESTRICH'S RELENTLESS focus on the top of the corporate trees blinds her to the flora among which most women (and most men) really live. In recent years, women working in smaller businesses (sometimes their own), in which hours and rules are less rigid than in the *Fortune* 500, have prospered as never before. Furchtgott-Roth reports that, between 1987 and 1999, women-owned businesses more than doubled in

NOEMIE EMERY *is a frequent contributor to the* WEEKLY STANDARD *and other magazines. Her article, "The* New Yorker*: Legends of the Fall," appeared in the April* COMMENTARY.

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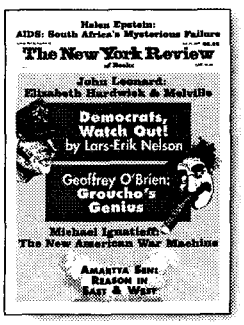

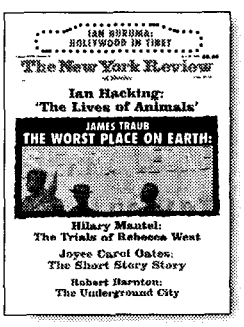

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number to 9.1 million and now generate $3.6 trillion in annual sales.

To Estrich, however, the women who have opened businesses of their own are nothing but victims, forced out of her world by systemic bigotry. Or—much worse—they are weaklings or sell-outs who have let down the feminist cause. "It is not my intent," she says, "to diminish the accomplishments of women who have left big business for small . . . [or] big law firms for small ones, [or] corporate America for the high-tech sector." But diminish she does, over and over again. Here she is on Brenda Barnes, the top management officer of PepsiCo, who left her high-paying job to spend time with her family: "Dropping out—pulling back—is also a selfish decision, from the collective perspective of feminism. . . . [I]t negatively affects other women, it retards change." But why, one would like to know, should other people sacrifice their family life, their happiness, to pay for Susan Estrich's "collective perspective"?

There seems, however, to be no end to what Estrich wants women to do for her cause, including, when it comes to the issue of sexual harassment, throwing all principle to the winds. In 1991, in the effort to derail the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court, feminists, including Estrich, relied on charges brought against Thomas by Anita Hill that, she concedes today, did not amount to much: "even if everything Hill complained of was true, it only proved that Thomas was crude, not that he was a lawbreaker, or morally unqualified to serve." But no matter. Feminists thought that they had found a tool that could be used against others, and that could never be turned against *them*.

But it was. In 1994, they urged their great friend Bill to sign an extension of the Violence Against Women Act that would allow the plaintiff in a sexual-harassment case to rummage freely through the past private life of the accused. Alas, as Estrich now complains, the very rules she had "supported and helped to create" were used by the lawyers in the Paula Jones case to unearth her favorite President's affair with Monica Lewinsky, which in turn led to his impeachment and disgrace. All this, she admits, created something of a quandary for her: "How could I question Clarence Thomas's fitness to serve on the Supreme Court, and then turn around and defend the President?" Her revealing, pathetic answer: it is all a matter of sticking by your friends.

It has been 30 years since feminists began making the "revolutionary" arguments that appear so stale and tired in *Sex & Power*, a work that sets out to justify feminism but ends by inadvertently indicting it. This book is only for those, like Susan Estrich, who need to deny their confusion and failure. All others can safely ignore it.

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F. Andrew Hanssen is a national fellow at the Hoover Institution and an assistant professor, Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, at Montana State University.

The story of Jackie Robinson and his auspicious pairing with Brooklyn Dodgers' president Branch Rickey to break major league baseball's color barrier in 1947 is well known. Less well known is the role competitive market forces played in that story. The driving impetus behind baseball's integration was the desire to win games. Because the Dodgers wanted to win, they signed Jackie Robinson. And because other baseball owners also wanted to win, they could not continue to ignore African Americans once Jackie Robinson took the field. **The cost of remaining segregated when others integrated was too high.**

Three years earlier, the Dodgers had finished seventh in an eight-team league and Branch Rickey was under fire. Needing to win, he recognized the potential of the shunned African American ballplayers. "The greatest untapped reservoir of raw material in the history of the game is the black race!" he said. "The Negroes will make us winners for years to come, for which I will happily bear being called a bleeding heart and a do-gooder and all that humanitarian rot." Integrating unexpectedly, Rickey was careful not to announce the signing of Jackie Robinson until he had locked up several other top African American prospects, including future Hall of Famer Roy Campanella and future Cy Young Award winner Don Newcombe.

While the Dodgers were winning six National League pennants between 1947 and 1956, pressure was growing on other teams to integrate. The source of that pressure was not moral but financial. According to my statistical analysis, each African American player in the starting lineup was worth six additional wins to his team in 1950. That is a *big* number—the average gap between first and second place during the last fifty years has been about six games. Inevitably, the National League integrated.

The situation was slightly different in the American League, but the eventual result was the same. The dominant AL team until the mid-1960s was the New York Yankees, who paid the price for not signing African American players during the 1950s. Although the strength of their roster enabled them to continue winning for a while, their fifty years of dominance came to an end. In 1965, the Yanks lost more games than they won for the first time since 1919. Eleven years would pass before the next Yankee pennant; in that 1976 pennant win, six of the nine starters were African American.

The moral is that discriminating in a competitive setting is costly. Just as baseball teams that refuse to sign the best players lose more often, firms that refuse to hire the best available candidates regardless of race, gender, and so forth have higher costs, produce lower-quality products, or are slower to innovate than their nondiscriminating rivals. As Nobel Prize–winning economist Gary Becker points out, **society's best safeguard against persistent discrimination is competition.** Racist and sexist firms either mend their ways or go bankrupt. We can see the fruits of this lesson on the ball field, where today African American ballplayers make up 30 percent of all major leaguers.

— F. Andrew Hanssen

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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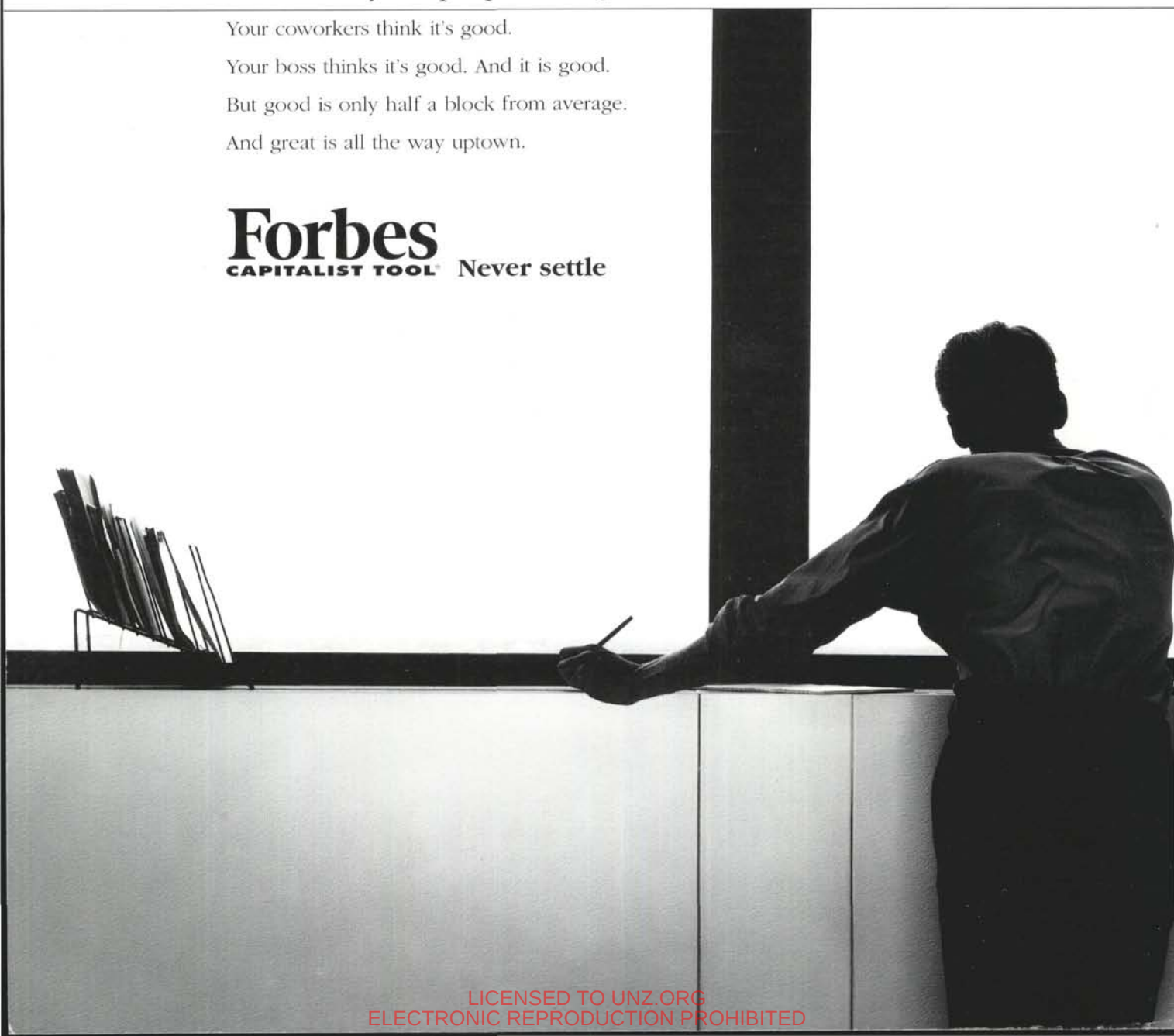

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